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ABSTRACT

Reporting on the work of a task force formed for the purpose of improving writing skills in the Memphis (Tennessee) City Schools, grades K-12, this paper identifies the efforts of the task force and its recommendations and traces the development and implementation of the Writing Across the Curriculum Project. An introduction notes the importance of writing, while a second section examines national trends in writing instruction and skills. A third section presents data showing a significant number of Memphis students who dislike writing and do not believe it is important. Sections four and five report the amount of teacher training in the instruction of writing and their recommendations for improving student writing, and administrator attitudes on improving writing, while the sixth section looks at content teachers' instructional practices. Recommendations are made in a seventh section, and the program's implementation is discussed in the eighth. A follow-up report and summary conclude the paper. Appendixes contain copies of student and teacher questionnaires, a writing sample survey, and an observation questionnaire. Guidelines, which stress the idea of writing in numerous modes and writing each day, and activities for writing across the curriculum are also offered. (JC)

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WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM: A DISTRICT-WIDE APPROACH

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A Paper Presented at the NCTE Spring Regional

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Preface

Under the leadership and direction of the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction of the Memphis City Schools and with the endorsement of the Superintendent and his staff and the elected Board members, a Task Force was formed for the purpose of studying the status of writing in grades K-12 of the Memphis City Schools and making specific recommendations for the improvement of instruction. This task force was comprised of elementary and secondary teachers in the Memphis City Schools; instructors, professors, and writing directors from area colleges and universities; and, various members of the local business community.

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the Task Force was divided into the following subcommittees: philosophy, currriculum, instructional facilities and materials, short and long range goals, staff development, and surveys and assessment. Each subcommittee followed the same procedure in its area of study by describing the current status and conditions, identifying the desired state or conditions, and making recommendations that would reconcile or narrow the gap between the existing and desired conditions for improving student writing and writing instruction.

This paper identifies the efforts of the task force and its various recommendations and traces the development and implementation of the Writing Across the Curriculum Project of the Memphis City Schools.

Introduction

"People want to write. The desire to express is relentless. People want others to know what they hold to be truthful. They need the sense of authority that goes with authorship. They need to detach themselves from experience and examine it by writing. Then they need to share what they have discovered through writing." So begins a report to the Ford Foundation (1978) entitled, Papers on Research About Learning - Balance the Basics : Let Them Write , by Donald Graves, a leading researcher in the teaching of writing.

The National Institute of Education's Research Within Reach : Oral and Written Communication maintains that writing meets a number of goals, some directly related to the educational process, others related to the larger context of students' lives. Primarily, the NIE report states writing is a means to expand thinking skills. Writing contributes to intelligence since, as a highly complex act, it demands high level thought (Graves, 1978). The act of structuring a writing assignment should require students to move through several different levels of cognition. Brainstorming, evaluation, selection of ideas, formulation of hypotheses, gathering of information to support the hypothesis, and the refining of ideas all serve to develop students' ability to think logically and critically.

Furthermore, writing is a means to expand learning. Writing, by means of learning logs and summary sheets, helps students internalize content area information which they are learning and provides opportunities for students to externalize the newly acquired information as well as explore relationships among diverse ideas.

Also, writing reinforces and fosters skill development in reading as well as other areas of the curriculum. Writing across the curriculum offers students specialized opportunities for writing in different formats such as technical reports and business correspondence that will serve them well in their future years. Writing is directly tied to the teaching of subject matter in all content areas. It is of value as a means of exploring ideas and concepts, as a way of clarifying thought, of expressing abstractions in concrete terms, and of providing students with insights about subject matter they would not attain otherwise.

Finally, students find writing to be pleasurable and psychologically satisfying. Young children as well as adults have an innate need to communicate. When attention is paid to the communcative intent of students' writing rather than just to the surface features and mechanical or grammatical errors, students realize and appreciate the value of their attempts to communicate and express their thoughts. This valuing of the students' attempts at self-expression provides reinforcement for the students' self-concept as well as encourages further development of communication skills.

Current Status of Writing Abilities

Ever since a 1975 Newsweek cover story, entitled "Why Johnny Can't Write," focused the nation's attention on the calamitous condition of student writing abilities, leading proponents of educational reform have advocated that more attention to the teaching of writing be given. For example, in High School , Ernest Boyer declares: "Clear writing leads to clear thinking; clear thinking is the basis of clear writing." In Horace's Compromise , Thedore

Sizer asserts that "exercises in writing should be the center of schooling." The reasons for this renewed interest in writing are multiple and complex. Partial answers are never totally satisfactory but, in this case, necessary in order to fathom the need for rethinking and redirecting one of the most important aspects of education: writing. Following is an overview of recent reports and studies concerning the current state of student writing abilities and instructional practices which the task force examined.

Probably the most definitive study, the 1981 National Writing Assessment conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, found that while America's 17-year olds had a general grasp of the mechanics of writing, only half could write a wholly satisfactory piece of explanatory prose. Only 15 percent could write a fully successful persuasive argument. In fact, the report stated, students seemed "genuinely puzzled at requests to explain or defend their points of view."

Moreover, only 7 percent of the students reported that they routinely engaged in activities to prepare themselves for writing, created multiple drafts of their writing, or rewrote and revised what they had written basd on the comments of others. The study laid blame at the doors of the nation's schools, asserting that "neither 13-year olds nor 17-year olds receive a great deal of instruction in writing or are required to do much writing in school." Other recent reports on American education have echoed this concern.

For a 1978 Ford Foundation report entitled Balance the Basics : Let Them Write , Donald Graves, a professor of English education at the University of New Hampshire, surveyed school systems that supposedly stressed writing. He found that 2nd graders averaged only three pieces of writing in three months and that secondary school students wrote even less.

John I. Goodlad, in his 1983 book, A Place Called School , published the results of a survey of 38 public elementary, junior high, and high schools

that revealed that while students spent a lot of time writing in the early years, the tasks mostly involved answering simple questions and filling in blanks. By junior high school, the frequency of writing had dropped ny one-third; by high school, by one-half.

Arthur Applebee and his colleagues conducted one of the most comprehensive studies on writing in the public schools, known as "The National Study of Secondary School Writing." Between October 1979 and April 1980, they observed 68 teachers in all major academic disciplines in two high schools. In addition, they surveyed 754 high school teachers in six subject areas who had been identified by their principals as "good" teachers.

The observational study revealed that while students had a pencil about 44 percent of the time during class, only 3 percent of that time was spent composing prose of a paragraph or more. The rest of the time was spent taking notes, filling in blanks, and answering questions that required no more than a word or a sentence in response--what Applebee called "word/sentence-level skills." Only about 3 percent of students' homework involved writing a paragraph or more.

Of longer pieces, the typical writing assignment was a page or less, consisted of a single draft, and was completed in less than a day, the study revealed. Only one-third of the teachers reported asking their students to write frequently and at great length.

The study's concern extended beyond the number of pages that students write to the way that writing is taught and the environment in which it is used. For example, Applebee discovered that "in a typical assignment, just over three minutes elapsed from the time the teacher began to discuss or pass out the assignment until students began writing. . . .In most cases, students received explicit guidelines only about the length of the paper."

Activities to help students while they were writing were almost non-existent, the study indicated. Alomost one-third of the teachers surveyed reported simplifying writing tasks by breaking assignments into stages. Just under 30 percent asked for more than one draft of an assignment. And most teachers wanted the first paper handed in to be the final draft.

"The other thing we've found," Applebeee stated, " is that a very high proportion of the time, the student is essentially repeating back information, rather than reorganizing or presenting information to someone who doesn't already know more about the subject." "We found almost no rewriting going on," he said, "and that seemed to us a very direct function of the kind of writing tasks. If it's essentially testing that students have learned, rewriting doesn't make a lot of sense." Similarly, while teachers' comments were often "extensive and thoughtful," they were in "one sense, irrelevant, in that there was no rewriting discussed. Though the comments were perceptive, they were not part of the overall writing process."

."Grammar, spelling, and punctuation are very much overemphasized, partly because they're very much easier to see in students' papers," according to the Stanford researcher. "Supporting or organizing an argument is much harder to comment on," he pointed out, with the result that teachers spent very little time focusing on the meaning of what students wrote.

Applebee's observations in the classroom suggest some of the reasons for what George Hillock at the University of Chicago found when he recently examined the effectiveness of writing instruction. Hillock reviewed 60 studies on the effectiveness of writing instruction, involving some 12,000 students. He found that the traditional approach, in which students are passive recipients of rules, advice, and examples of good writing, was about half as effective as any of the experiemental approaches now being tried in the schools. One of his most startling finds was that teacher comments on papers don't appear to have much

effect on improving the quality of writing. "Basically, teacher comments tend to be what I call diffuse," he stated. "They're aimed at a great many elements of the written product, and my guess is that most student writers can't assimilate all that. . . .There's one study in which teachers corrected every error and students had to rewrite the papers. And in that particular treatment, the students lost considerable ground--at least one standard deviation--and I suspect that's because the comments were so negative."

Hillock is even more critical of the role played by grammar instruction in the schools. His research revealed that the study of traditional school grammar, that is, the definition of parts of speech, the parsing or diagramming of sentences, and so forth, has no effect on raising the quality of student writing. Every other focus of writing instruction examined in his review was stronger.

Student Attitudes on Writing and Writing Instruction

One of the first steps in implementing this district-wide writing program was to develop a knowledge base for planning purposes. This was done through the collection of essential and critical facts on the status of writing by students in the Memphis City Schools and through the analysis of this data. A survey form, "How I Feel About Writing," was sent to a random sample of Memphis City Schools' students in grades 4, 8, and 11 to obtain information concerning student attitudes toward writing and their confidence in regard to writing skills (see Appendix A). Students from these grades were selected to mirror the survey conducted for the Third National Writing Assessment (NAEP) in 1980.

Generally, the Memphis City Schools' students were slightly more positive about their attitudes and confidence in writing skills than the national population. For example, the majority of Memphis City Schools' students indicated they

-- like to write their ideas down.

-- feel they are good at writing.

-- do not feel that expressing ideas through writing is a waste of time.

However, there are a significant number of students who did not express these same feelings. For example,

-- 5-12% of those surveyed do not like to write their ideas down.

-- 16-28% feel they are no good at writing.

-- 37-54% do not feel that people enjoy what they write.

-- 22-30% are afraid of writing essays that will be evaluated.

-- 14-19% do not feel confident in their ability to clearly express their ideas in writing.

-- 9-24% avoid writing.

In addition to the survey on student attitudes concerning their confidence in writing, a second survey, "Background Questionnaire," was completed by those same sampled students in grades 8 and 11 (see Appendix A). This instrument was also obtained from materials published by the Third National Writing Assessment in 1980. The items involved questions on how the students perceived they were being taught writing. The findings were as follows:

-- 16% of the students at grade 8 and 13% of those in grade 11 reported having no writing assignments in the last six weeks as part of a school assignment.

-- 59% at grade 8 and 60% at grade 11 reported having 1-4 writing assignments during the last six weeks.

-- 36% at grade 8 and 33% at grade 11 reported that no or little time was spent during literature or grammar classes on instruction in how to write reports and essays.

-- 4% at grade 8 and grade 11 reported never being encouraged to do prewriting activities.

-- 44% at grade 8 and 31% at grade 11 reported only sometimes being encouraged to do prewriting activities.

-- 17% at grade 8 and 12% at grade 11 reported never rewriting a paper before it is turned in. 47% at

grade 8 and 43% at grade 11 reported rewriting a paper sometimes.

-- 24% at grade 8 and 12% at grade 11 reported never having written suggestions on how to improve the writing when papers are returned.

-- 5% at grade 8 and 7% at grade 11 reported never having teachers discuss returned papers.

-- 38% at grade 8 and 41% at grade 11 reported teachers discussing returned papers only sometimes.

-- 7% at grade 8 and 8% at grade 11 reported they never enjoyed working on writing assignments.

-- 59% at grade 8 and 58% at grade 11 reported they never enjoyed working on writing assignments sometimes.

Teacher Preparation

To augment this knowledge base, a random sample of 110 English teachers (25% of the total population), grades 7-12, were selected to receive the "English Teacher's Questionnaire." (See Appendix B.) This instrument requested background on teachers' education and experience as well as questions pertaining to their philosophy regarding the teaching of writing. The findings were as follows:

-- A median level of 15 years teaching experience in English was reported.

-- 53% (29 of 54 teachers reporting) have their master's degree.

-- A median number of 33 hours of English courses taken at the undergraduate level was reported.

-- 52% (28 of 54 teachers reporting) have taken graduate courses in English. 47% (25 of 54 teachers reporting) have not taken any graduate courses in English.

-- 20 teachers reported having taken courses on the teaching of writing. Ususally, however, the results indicate that the majority of teachers have not had any formal instruction in the teaching of writing.

-- The most frequently reported suggestion from the teachers concerning how they would change the Memphis City Schools' curriculum to emphasize writing was that a separate course on writing be developed.

-- In answer to the question, "What do you need to teach writing the way it should be taught," the most frequently made comment was that the size of English classes be reduced so that teachers would be better able to manage the

time-consuming tasks of grading and commenting on student writing.

Administrators' Attitudes on Improving Writing

In conjunction with the junior and senior high English teachers' opinions on how to improve writing, all principals, district directors, and instructional supervisors were assessed their opinions concerning improving writing. The summary of average ratings of English teachers' suggestions from instructional supervisors, junior high principals, and senior high principals indicated the following suggestions.

-- Require each content/subject area teacher to develop and implement a plan by which that teacher's class will be provided opportunities to develop writing skills.

-- Develop special opportunities for students to show and to be recognized for writing accomplishments in audience situations.

-- Provide supplementary curricula to content/subject area teachers which include lesson plans and activities for developing writing skills.

-- Teach writing as a separate course one semester at the senior high level.

-- Plan a structured method for teaching writing skills

along with grammmar and again with literature without separate courses on writing.

-- Require all semester exams in all subjects to include some essay questions.

Instructional Practices of Content Teachers Across the Curriculum

A questionnaire was sent to a random sample of elementary and secondary teachers across grade and subject areas inquiring as to instructional practices which teachers might use in developing writing skills in content areas other than English class. The results included the following repsonses at the secondary level:

-- 51% of teachers responding reported almost never requiring students to do expressive writing.

-- 38% reported they almost never require students to write reports.

-- 65% reported they almost never require students to do imaginative writing.

-- 59% reported spending half-an-hour or less per week on analysis/evaluation of student writing.

-- 59% reported spending half-an-hour or less per week on editing, reviewing, and proofreading students' writing.

-- 21% reported spending half-an-hour or less of total weekly time on writing.

-- 28% reported spending half-an-hour or less on in-class writing per week.

-- 65% reported spending half-an-hour or less per week on mechanics, capitalization, and punctuation.

-- 51% reported spending half-an-hour or less per week on organization, logic, and persuasion.

-- 58% reported spending half-an-hour or less per week on prewriting activities such as brainstorming or discussion.

-- 28% reported their typical writing assignment was 1 or 2 sentences.

-- 32% reported their typical writing assignment was 1 or 2 paragraphs.

-- 45% did not specify the audience for whom the writing is intended.

-- 88% of writing assignment topics are teacher directed even though 82% state that students should have a choice in the topics of their writing assignments.

At the elementary level, the results indicated the following characteristics:

-- The most frequent type of writing was copying with 76% of the teachers reporting doing this activity almost every day.

-- 68% reported spending time almost every day answering questions other than test items.

-- 44% reported spending time every day with fill-in-the-blank activities.

-- 6% spend time almost every day on writing (keeping journals, writing about personal experiences and feelings).

-- 3% spend time almost every day on transactional writing (reports, exposition, informing or persuading).

-- 5% spend time almost every day on imaginative writing (poetry, fiction, drama, etc.).

In addition, the subcommittee on curriculum noted that on the elementary level neither the publication of student writing nor the application of the writing process approach is practiced extensively throughout the system. What does take place in these areas is merely the individual endeavors of a few teachers. The subcommittee noted that on the secondary level that many

teachers, including English teachers, do not engage in regular writing practices and exercises as the results of the questionnaire indicated. Rather, these teachers find it easier to give practice exercises on grammar and mechanics. Too often, these teachers did not adhere to the prescribed curriculum which identifies what should be taught per grade level in composition, but simply taught what they liked to teach or were most comfortable teaching.

Recommendations

From the goals and findings of the various subcommittee reports, a list of recommendations was delineated to both capitalize on the strengths inherent in the current endeavors of the Memphis City Schools and to address those identified areas of weakness needed to improve the creative and expository writing skills of students, K-12. For a more in-depth explanation of the rationale of the proposed writing program, the reader's attention is directed to the Writing Objectives established by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (1982) through a nationally representative consensus process. The thoroughness of this report precluded the need to develop a distinct rationale since the espoused objectives are equivalent to the philosophy and goals of the Memphis City Schools, which are listed below.

-- To improve the creative and expository writing skills of students, K-12.

-- To develop a comprehensive writing program.

-- To develop a special needs program based upon student achievement and teacher needs.

-- To reinforce writing in all classrooms in the Memphis City Schools.

-- To develop a system-wide writing manual which provides guidelines for appropriate writing experiences at each grade/subject level.

-- To provide appropriate instructional materials to support writing activities.

-- To provide teachers with staff development and inservice activities to support and reinforce student and teacher writing skills.

-- To develop a plan for regular system-wide writing assessment.

To meet those goals and in consideration of the various subcommitte reports and survey results, the following recommendations were made by the Task Force.

1. Develop a comprehensive writing program, K-12, that includes the following characteristics and activities:

   a. Students should use writing as a way of thinking and learning about subject knowledge and self knowledge by

-- keeping exploratory notes and journals in which they record and react to what they are learning,

-- keeping notes and journals in which they react to their personal experiences,

-- using classroom writing to enhance learning in a variety of subject areas.

b. Students should use writing to accomplish a variety of purposes by

-- engaging in a variety and range of writing tasks, i.e., informative, persuasive, and literary,

-- writing in a variety of areas of the curriculum.

c. Students should learn to manage the writing process by teacher directed activities that

-- make them aware of what they already know about a topic,

-- provide additional information or experiences,

-- help them make choices and decisions about the information that they have gathered so they can begin drafting,

-- reduce anxiety about the drafting process,

-- show them what to do if the drafting process breaks down,

-- help them recognize when their ideas are incomplete or imprecise and offer suggestions to remedy the problems,

-- teach them how to revise their own works,

-- teach them how to edit.

d. Students should learn how to control the forms of written language by

-- using their own writing process to help develop control of the forms of written language,

-- recognizing that their initial plans may need to be changed once they have started writing,

-- learning organizational strategies and grammatical forms in appropriate contexts.

e. Students should learn to appreciate the value of writing by

-- writing for meaningful reasons,

-- receiving constructive responses to their ideas,

-- receiving continuous encouragement and support for engaging in the writing process and for work that is well done.

2. Develop a comprehensive writing manual which includes supplementary techniques for teaching writing across the content areas as well as lesson plans and activities for developing writing skills.

3. Provide appropriate instructional materials, including textbooks, to support writing program activities.

4. Provide extensive staff development opportunities to all teachers on the theoretical and pedagogical aspects of writing and the writing program.

5. Provide opportunities for classroom, institutional, district, and system-wide publishing of student writing.

6. Develop a writing assessment plan which includes holistic, analytic, and primary trait scoring measuring individual, school, and system-wide writing abilities.

7. Offer composition courses as separate, credited classes in junior high and/or high school.

8. Limit composition classes (recommended above) to 20 students.

9. Implement and/or expand writing programs with access to word-processing, computerized composition programs.

10. Establish composition labs in junior high and senior high schools.

11. Provide tuition for teachers willing to take additional courses in the teaching of writing.

These recommendations resulted in the creation of the Writing Across the Curriculum Project.

Implementation

With the formation of the Task Force in October, 1984, and the presentation of its summary report in June, 1985, the stage was set for the most ambitious aspect of the Writing Across the Curriculum Project: the selection of pilot schools and teachers and the implementation of a teacher training program. This initial pilot group was comprised of thirteen schools (one elementary, junior high, and senior school from each of the system's four districts plus the Lester Demonstration School, an elementary school under the supervision of the Department of Curriculum & Instruction).

In the summer of 1985, the New Jersey Writing Project conducted a staff development program for approximately 70 teachers from these 13 pilot schools. Five teachers from each school were identifed to participate in this initial phase of the project (no more than 3 teachers from each school were to be

English teachers) and each teacher involved received 3 graduate hours credit from Memphis State University. This was in addition to receiving tuition and a $500 stipend. The New Jersey Writing Project was selected to conduct this initial staff development because it was the only teacher training project validated by the National Diffusion Network and approved by the Joint Dissemination Review Panel (National Endowment for the Humanities).

The training involved three stages: teacher training, implementation and staff development, and assessment. The teacher training in the summer of 1985 consisted of a three week summer institute for teachers. Each day of the training program was divided into a writing/sharing session and a theory presentation in the afternoon. During their sessions, teachers were required to write in a variety of modes: expressive, transactional, poetic, extensive, and reflexive. They were asked to keep journals from which they shared excerpts with the institute instructors. Each participant was led through the process of writing, simulating actual classroom experiences. The institute instructors acquainted these teachers with the scope of activities involved in developing writing skills and provided them an opportunity to actually engage in the activities.

The second stage consisted of a two-part program. First, returning teacher consultants introduced writing as a process into their classrooms. Within the confines of the regular instructional time, each teacher provided time for students to write in class. Teachers were requested to set aside a certain portion of each day for their students to write. Making and following such a schedule enabled students to expect and to look forward to writing time. The types of writing varied from day to day based on specific instructional needs. Time was allotted for expressive writing in student journals or poetic writing that was shared with others or published. Students were also given transactional writing assignments in conjunction with their reading lesson or

some other content area lesson. A variety of writing tasks ensured that participating students wrote for a variety of purposes and audiences. All students were instructed in the process of effective editorial feedback. Teachers did not have to edit each student's paper because students were able to do that for themselves and for others.

Second, in addition to implementation in the classroom, the returning teachers began staff development programs suited to the unique needs of the content/subject area curricula and in providing workshops for their respective faculty members. Their active involvement in staff development and inservice programs (at the local school and district-wide) provided a means of allowing other teachers and administrators the opportunity to gain information and insight into a successful writing program. This type of involvement sought to effect more favorable attitudes among local educators regarding the process approach in writing and its implementation in the various subject area classrooms.

The third stage involved the development and use of assessment instruments and procedures. This evaluative phase encompassed the following components: student writing samples, teacher training in holistic scoring, and teacher and student writing attitude samples.

In addition to the New Jersey Writing Project summer teacher training program, Memphis State's English Department conducted fall, spring, and summer (1985-86) contracted classes for Memphis City Schools' teachers on the implementation of the process approach in writing. Tutition was provided for these teachers; however, no stipend was paid. The New Jersey Writing Project summer institute and the contracted Memphis State writing classes remain in place at this time and will be continued on a yearly basis as needed.

In the fall of 1986, an Elementary Communication Arts Curriculum for grades 1-6 was instituted replacing the previous language arts program. The

primary focus of this new curricular package is the writing component. The philosophy underlying this curriculum rests upon the interrelated and interdependent skills of thinking, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The writing component of the Communication Arts Curriculum had been identified as a productive process with the expression of meaning as its primary goal. This particular component has five strands: composition, grammar, mechanics, spelling, and handwriting. Composition, of course, involves the writing process in its entirety. Because of the emphasis placed on improving the writing skills of learners in K-12, an entire section of the curriculum guide for the Communication Arts Curriculum is devoted to writing. "The Writing Process: Guidelines and Activities" (Appendix E) was included with the curriculum guide while also being distributed to all secondary English/Language Arts teachers. The emphasis on grammar, mechanics, and spelling within the writing component provided students opportunities and activities needed to integrate these strands into the writing process as they gain proficiency in self-expression.

Follow-Up

Although the Communication Arts package may be viewed as one means of implementing the process approach in the teaching of writing, it is an outgrowth of the Writing Across the Curriculum Project and the committment made by administrators, supervisors, and teachers to the process approach for all students, K-12, in all content areas. However, it is not the only by-product of this project.

Several other follow-up activities lent support to teachers and students of writing or sought to gather data about the effectiveness of this program. Students in pilot classes in grades 4, 8, and 11 participated in a Writing Sample Survey (see Appendix C) as a pre-and post-test measure of student writing

ability. Students in grade four completed the "Kangaroo exercise" while students in grades eight and eleven completed the "describe something exercise." Data was compiled and compared with baseline data taken in 1985 and with the National Assessment samples. The local samples were scored holistically by local teachers using a random numbering system so those scoring the samples could not distinguish between pre- and post-test samples. Results showed that students in the pilot classes using the process approach (as opposed to those in the control classess) had shown gains in writing skill and proficiency.

In an effort to follow-up the training teachers received in the summer institute, classroom visits and observations were conducted in the pilot classes by the Project Director. Evidence of writing instruction and activity was the primary focus of these observations with both teacher and observer completing an observation questionnaire (see Appendix D). In addition, teachers in these pilot classes were granted some latitude in adhering strictly to the scope and sequence of the curriculum so that appropriate emphasis could be given to writing instruction and its integration with the various language arts skills. In these pilot classes writing instruction was viewed as a means to incorporate the various strands of the language arts curriculum (literature, grammar, composition, research, spelling) into daily lessons and to reinforce the various skills and objectives contained within each strand.

Each participating school was asked to develop a school literary magazine to provide a forum for student writers to showcase their work. The cost for producing and publishing these documents was written into the budget of the Writing Project so that local schools would not be required to absorb this cost. Teachers and students from the various pilot schools produced a myriad of magazines offering a variety in style, size, and format. Student response was quite positive to the magazine format with a large number of participants seizng the opportunity to be "published".

In addition to this forum, a newsletter highlighting successful classroom practices and offering strategies for teaching writing was produced by the Division of Curriculum Development. Edited by one of the lead teachers from one of the pilot schools, the newsletter offered teachers the opportunity to write and to share ideas that they had found successful in the teaching of writing while gaining information in the theory and practice of writing instruction.

However, the newsletter was only one outlet for pilot teachers to share activities and strategies. One of the school system's four districts under the leadership of its English/Language Arts Supervisor established a curriculum sharing circle to facilitate and promote throughout the district's pilot schools the exchange of ideas, the use of materials and techniques successfully employed by others, the examination of problems and the sharing of successes, a district-wide exchange of information, and the provision of a forum for discussion and implementation of currciulum development. The sharing circle met for approximately an hour to an hour and a half after school at least twice a semester. Teachers were encouraged to discuss and share problems and successes encountered in the classroom while employing the process approach.
At the same time, teachers were provided an opportunity during the sharing circle time to write and share among themselves creating an atmosphere of trust and respect while improving morale, understanding, and communication.

The sharing circle offered teacher involvement in the on-going process of curriculum development. This involvement created a sense of commitment and motivation in the process and allowed teachers to have a vested interest in both the success of the writing project and the curriculum sharing circle.

As the project progressed, the fall of 1986 also saw the development of a cross-district letter writing project for selected pilot schools. Not only was this developed to improve students' writing abilities but was also designed

to follow the guidelines of the English/Language Arts curriculum (7-12) and to serve as a continuation of the Writing Across the Curriculum Project.

In its first year, the letter writing project involved a total of twelve secondary schools (three junior high and three senior high from District I and from District III of the Memphis City Schools' four districts). Ten of these schools had previously been designated as pilot schools; the other two were selected to include students from vocational English classes. At present only one teacher and one class per school have been involved as students engage in letter writing to one another across the districts. The coordination and supervision of this project have been done by the English/Language Arts Supervisors from the two districts involved.

Students in this program are involved in more than just the form and format of letter writing. This experience provides an opportunity for each student involved to be writing to a particular person, helping to develop a sense of voice and audience so fundamental in the writing process. In addition, letters are structured so as to allow communication about and reaction to various components of the English/Language Arts curriculum. Specifically, students are asked to respond to types and elements of literature expressing point of view, to give summaries and/or reviews of works read, and to share samples of creative and expository writing seeking input, feedback, and advice from one another concerning such writing.

Modifications of the letter writing project for the 1987-88 school year will allow more student input into topic selection creating higher student interest and motivation.

Summary

The Memphis City School System has made a serious instructional and financial commitment with the program to the teaching of writing in all content areas and across all grade levels. This is evidenced by the success of Phases I and II of the Writing Across the Curriculum Program and the improved educational techniques and increased writing motivation and achievement.

With the 1987-88 school year approaching, plans for implementing Phase III of the project are in place, and in some cases, already underway. These activities include the expansion of the staff development program and the continued teacher training prgram currently in place. The implementation of instructional objectives and methods continues in selected pilot schools. There is a built-in process for assessment of the objectives and methods and for the identification of necessary revisions and any needed changes before the implementation of Phases IV and V, scheduled for the spring of 1988 through the summer of 1989.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A . . . . . Student Attitudes on Writing and Writing Instruction

APPENDIX B . . . . . English Teacher's Questionnaire

APPENDIX C . . . . . Writing Sample Survey

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APPENDIX A

Student Attitudes on Writing and Writing Instruction

HOW I FEEL ABOUT WRITING

Directions. Below are several statements about writing. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Take your time and try to be as honest as possible.

Use the code below and blacken A, B, C, D, or E on your answer sheet to show how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Uncertain
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree

1. I like to write down my ideas.
2. I am no good at writing.
3. Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.
4. People seem to enjoy what I write.
5. I expect to do poorly in composition classes before I take them.
6. I look forward to writing down my ideas.
7. I write for other reasons besides school.
8. When I hand in a composition, I know I'm going to do poorly.
9. I enjoy writing.
10. I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.
11. I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in writing.
12. I avoid writing.

Memphis Assessment Writing
Background Questionnaire, Eighth Grade

Directions. Below are several questions about how you have been taught writing skills. Please read each question and the answer choices that follow it. Then on your answer sheet blacken the circle under the letter that indicates your answer.

1. How many reports and essays have you written during the last six weeks as part of any school assignment?

   A. None
   B. 1 to 4
   C. 5 to 8
   D. 9 to 12
   E. more than 12

2. In the general English, literature or grammar classes you have taken during the past two years, about what part of the class time was spent on instruction in how to write reports and essays?

   A. None of the time
   B. Little of the time
   C. About one-third of the time
   D. About one-half of the time
   E. Most of the time

3. Are you encouraged to jot down ideas and make notes about the topic of your paper before you write it?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

4. Are you encouraged to make outlines of your papers before you write them?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

5. Do you write a paper more than once before you turn it in to your teacher?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

6. When your papers are returned, do they have written suggestions on how to improve your writing?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

7. When your papers are returned, do your teachers discuss them with you?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

8. After your papers are returned, do you work on the paper again to improve it?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

9. Do you enjoy working on writing assignments?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

HOW I FEEL ABOUT WRITING

Directions. Below are several statements about writing. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Take your time and try to be as honest as possible.

Use the code below and blacken A, B, C, D, or E on your answer sheet to show how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Uncertain
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree

10. I like to write down my ideas.

11. I am no good at writing.

12. Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.

13. People seem to enjoy what I write.

14. I expect to do poorly in composition classes before I take them.

15. I look forward to writing down my ideas.

16. I write for other reasons besides school.

17. When I hand in a composition, I know I'm going to do poorly.

18. I enjoy writing.

19. I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.

20. I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in writing.

21. I avoid writing.

Memphis Assessment Writing
Background Questionnaire, Eleventh Grade

Directions. Below are several questions about how you have been taught writing skills. Please read each question and the answer choices that follow it. Then on your answer sheet blacken the circle under the letter that indicates your answer.

1. How many reports and essays have you written during the last six weeks as part of any school assignment?

   A. None
   B. 1 to 4
   C. 5 to 8
   D. 9 to 12
   E. more than 12

2. In the general English, literature or grammar classes you have taken during the past two years, about what part of the class time was spent on instruction in how to write reports and essays?

   A. None of the time
   B. Little of the time
   C. About one-third of the time
   D. About one-half of the time
   E. Most of the time

3. Are you encouraged to jot down ideas and make notes about the topic of your paper before you write it?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

4. Are you encouraged to make outlines of your papers before you write them?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

5. Do you write a paper more than once before you turn it in to your teacher?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

6. When your papers are returned, do they have written suggestions on how to improve your writing?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

7. When your papers are returned, do your teachers discuss them with you?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

8. After your papers are returned, do you work on the paper again to improve it?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

9. Do you enjoy working on writing assignments?

   A. Usually
   B. Sometimes
   C. Never
   D. I haven't written any papers.

HOW I FEEL ABOUT WRITING

Directions. Below are several statements about writing. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Take your time and try to be as honest as possible.

Use the code below and blacken A, B, C, D, or E on your answer sheet to show how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Uncertain
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree

10. I like to write down my ideas.

11. I am no good at writing.

12. Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.

13. People seem to enjoy what I write.

14. I expect to do poorly in composition classes before I take them.

15. I look forward to writing down my ideas.

16. I write for other reasons besides school.

17. When I hand in a composition, I know I'm going to do poorly.

18. I enjoy writing.

19. I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.

20. I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in writing.

21. I avoid writing.

APPENDIX B

English Teacher's Questionnaire

TEACHER SURVEY

1. What is the total number of years that you have taught English? ____

2. How many years have you taught English in Memphis City Schools? ____

3. What graduate degrees, if any, do you hold? _____

4. How many semester hours have you completed in college English? (To convert quarter hours to semester hours, multiply the number of quarter hours by 2/3.)

   Undergraduate semester hours: _____ Graduate semester hours: _____

5. List the course titles and the number of semester hours you have taken in the teaching of writing.

6. Why do you feel that writing is an important goal of education?

7. Do you feel confident that the way you teach writing is the best way? Why do you think so?

8. What would you need to teach writing the way you think it should be taught?

9. Does the textbook you currently use give adequate and appropriate emphasis to writing? Why do you think it does or does not?

10. Given your knowledge of the current curriculum in Memphis City Schools, what and how would you change it to emphasize writing? (Use reverse side if necessary.)

Writing Across the Curriculum--Questionnaire

When answering the questions on this questionnaire, please respond with reference to the classes that you teach in the subject of your major teaching responsibility.

Use the code below and blacken A, B, C, D, or E on your answer sheet to indicate your answers to questions 1 through 12.

A. almost every day
B. weekly
C. monthly
D. once or twice a semester
E. almost never

How often do you require students to do the following types of writing?

1. copying
2. taking notes
3. writing from dictation
4. answering questions, other than taking tests
5. filling in blanks
6. making lists or outlines
7. labeling, making charts, or doing similar tasks
8. translating, summarizing, paraphrasing, or doing similar tasks
9. taking tests
10. expressive writing (keeping journals, writing about personal experiences or feelings)
11. transactional writing (reports, exposition, informing, persuading)
12. imaginative writing (poetry, fiction, drama, etc.)

Use the code below and blacken the circles labeled A, B, C, D, or E on your answer sheet to indicate your answers to questions 13 through 28.

A. 0 - ½ hour
B. ½ - 1 hour
C. 1 - 2 hours
D. 2 - 3 hours
E. 3 - 5 hours

13. During a typical week, how much time is devoted to writing by your students?

During a typical week, how much class time do you usually spend on each of the following activities?

14. in-class writing

15. discussion or analysis of models or examples.

16. mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, etc.)

17. grammar

18. techniques of organization, logic, persuasion, etc.

19. pre-writing (brainstorming, discussion, getting ideas, etc.)

20. analysis or evaluation of student writing

21. editing, reviewing, proofreading

Consider the most successful writing assignment that your students completed last year. In connection with that assignment, how much class time was spent on each of the following?

22. pre-writing activities (brainstorming, discussion, getting ideas, etc.)

23. reading and discussing models or examples

24. discussing organization or outlining

25. discussing errors to avoid

26. writing in class

27. student-teacher conferences

28. editing, revising, proofreading

29. What is the length of the typical writing assignment given to your students?

A. one or two sentences
B. one or two paragraphs
C. one or two pages
D. more than two pages

Use the code below and blacken A, B, C, or D on your answer sheet to indicate your answers to questions 30 through 44.

A. a lot
B. quite a bit
C. not very much
D. none at all

When evaluating student writing, how much importance do you place on each of the following?

30. content (ideas, knowledge of material, logic, etc.)

31. organization

32. development (fullness, thoroughness)

33. grammar and sentence structure

34. word choice and phrasing

35. mechanics (spelling, capitalization, punctuation)

36. neatness

37. penmanship

How much influence has each of the following had on your own attitudes toward writing?

38. former teachers

39. content of college courses

40. former and present friends

41. texts and literature

42. your own experiences as a writer

43. your own reading, exclusive of professional literature

44. your experiences as a teacher

Use the code below and blacken A or B on your answer sheet to indicate your answers to questions 45 through 56.

A. yes
B. no

45. Do your students know the basis on which their writing will be evaluated?

46. Do you mark errors in spelling, mechanics, and grammar that your students make?

47. Do you correct errors your students make in spelling, mechanics, and grammar?

When you give a writing assignment, do you specify the following?

48. length

49. format (margins, heading, type of paper, color of ink, etc.)

50. evaluation criteria

51. audience for whom the writing is intended

52. topic

53. organization

54. due date

55. style

56. Should students have a choice in the topics of their writing assignments?

* * * * *

NOTE: The questions on page 5 should be answered only by elementary teachers who teach language arts and by secondary teachers whose major teaching responsibility is English.

Use the code below and blacken A, B, C, or D on your answer sheet to indicate your answers to questions 57 through 61.

A. a lot
B. quite a bit
C. not very much
D. none at all

When teaching writing, how much use do you make of the following materials?

57. grammar or composition texts

58. handbook of style and mechanics

59. workbooks

60. teacher-made handouts

61. audio-visual materials

APPENDIX C

Writing Sample Survey

"Kangaroo" Exercise

Here is a picture of a kangaroo in Australia. Look at the picture for a while. What do you think is happening? Where do you suppose the kangaroo came from? Where do you think he is going? Look how high he jumps! Why do you suppose he is jumping over the fence?

Write a story about what is happening in the picture.

"Describe Something" Exercise

Everybody knows of something that is worth talking about. Maybe you know about a famous building like the Empire State Building in New York City or something like the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. Or you might know a lot about the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City or the new sports stadium in Atlanta or St. Louis. Or you might be familiar with something from nature, like Niagara Falls, a gigantic wheat field, a grove of orange trees, or a part of a wide, muddy river like the Mississippi.

There is probably something you can describe. Choose something you know about. It may be something from around where you live, or something you have seen while traveling, or something you have studied in school. Think about it for a while and then write a description of what it looks like so that it could be recognized by someone who has read your description.

Name what you are describing and try to use your best writing.

APPENDIX D

Observation Questionnaire

OBSERVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

	YES	NO	OBSERVED
1. Do your students write in a variety of forms, for a wide range of purposes, and for a variety of audiences?			
2. Do you provide class time for your students to write?			
3. Do you write with your students?			
4. Does each student have frequent opportunity to experience the entire writing process - prewriting - drafting - editing/revision?			
5. Are usage and grammar skills reinforced during the editing stage?			
6. Do you use peer editing and/or student response groups?			
7. Do students keep writing journals? -Learning logs?			
8. Do you keep a writing folder for each student?			
9. Do you conference with students during the drafting stage?			
10. Do you provide avenues for publishing student writing?			

Date: _____ Teacher's signature _____

Observer's signature _____

APPENDIX E

"Writing Across the Curriculum:
Guidelines and Activities"

Writing Across The Curriculum

GUIDELINES AND ACTIVITIES

Division of Curriculum Development
Department of Curriculum & Instruction
Memphis City Schools, Memphis, Tennessee

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Acknowledgment is given to the following teachers for their time and talents in developing this section of the Elementary Communication Arts Curriculum Guide. Utilization of this guide will help ensure the improvement of writing skills for all students in Memphis City Schools, K-12.

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Louise McIntyre	-	Sherwood Elementary
Cynthia Ward	-	Westwood High School
Cindy Wills	-	Lester Demonstration School
Joyce Wilson	-	Westwood High School

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This project was completed under the supervision of Dr. Richard Potts, Project Coordinator.

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PREFACE

A system-wide goal approved by the elected members of the Board of Education in 1984-85 was to improve the writing skills of students across the curriculum, K-12. By using a holistic approach to instruction, with emphasis on writing in the content areas, the goal becomes realistic.

Writing, a major component of the Communication Arts curriculum, is a powerful tool for teaching in an integrated curriculum. The following section, "The Writing Process: Guidelines and Activities," defines the writing process, gives a descriptive explanation of writing in the curriculum, and gives many diversified activities for students at all grade levels.

PHILOSOPHY

Teachers in all content areas can and should be involved in teaching writing. Teachers should use the process approach which emphasizes not just a final product but each stage of the writing process -- prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and sharing/publishing. To become proficient writers, students must be given frequent opportunities to write; therefore, teachers should provide daily writing practice. Writing is an essential part of learning. Like listening, speaking, reading, and thinking, writing is an activity which is necessary in all classes and not just the English/ Language Arts class.

GOALS

- To stimulate writing in all classrooms in the Memphis City Schools
- To encourage teachers to use the process approach to teach writing
- To encourage teachers and students to write daily in all content areas
- To provide students opportunities to write for different audiences and purposes
- To integrate oral language, handwriting, spelling, and grammar in the writing process at the student's developmental level
- To measure growth, development, and learning in the content areas through writing
- To use a variety of evaluative methods
- To provide an opportunity for students to publish and share their writings

ASSUMPTIONS

- Writing is a teachable skill.
- Effective communication is the goal of all language skills.
- Reading, thinking, writing, speaking, and listening are integrated in teaching and learning.
- Writing is valuable for its contribution to learning.
- Teachers will model the writing process.
- Students can write in a variety of forms in any content area.
- Content is a source for writing. Teachers will use at least one writing project with every unit.
- Grammar, spelling, and handwriting should not hamper the drafting stage of writing.
- Students will keep sketches, folders, notebooks, journals, diaries, research logs, and learning logs.
- Teachers will encourage correctness and neatness as prerequisites of publishing and displaying.
- Teachers will display students' writing frequently and attractively.
- Teachers will encourage students to enter writing contests.

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IMPLEMENTATION

Write Daily

Teachers should set aside a certain portion of each day for their students to write. If a schedule is made and followed, students will soon expect and look forward to writing time. The TYPES OF WRITING can vary from day to day. For example, students can be given time to write EXPRESSIVE (personal) pieces in their journals, or they may be given a specific (TRANSACTIONAL) writing assignment in conjunction with their reading lesson, or they may work on a story or poem (POETIC) to be SHARED or PUBLISHED. Variation of writing tasks will ensure that students write for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Kindergarten-Second Grade

The most important aspect of writing instruction at this level is encouragement. Some children may not know the symbols for sounds or words, but they need to learn that marks on paper can convey meaning. Young children, even without any skill at making letters, can compose in writing. A series of squiggles or lines on paper mean much more to a child when we ask that child to read back to us what was "written." These young authors can SHARE with the class by reading their stories orally. Gradually, these children can learn to apply REVISING/EDITING strategies by our asking them to elaborate on what they have written. Children should be given lots of time to compose, either individually or as a group, and time to share, either with the whole class or with partners. By following the STAGES OF WRITING, teachers can do the following:

- Provide time, materials, and structure for writing.
- Let children practice PREWRITING activities through discussion, talking about individual and class experiences, and drawing pictures.
- Provide many functional reasons for writing by labeling areas of the classroom, writing letters, taking down pretend telephone messages, etc.

- CONFERENCE with children as they progress in writing. Gently ask questions that will make students think about extending and elaborating on the information in their writing.

- As children progress in their spelling development, draw attention to letters and words they have learned.

- As children progress in their handwriting skills, emphasize correct letter formation and legibility before publishing.

- PUBLISH the students' writing for in-class reading time and to take home to read to parents. Encouraging children in reading - writing opportunities will go a long way in making them active and life-long language learners.

(Capitalized words refer to other sections of the handbook. Refer to these sections and ACTIVITIES for more information and suggestions.)

Third-Sixth Grade

During these years of a child's development, writing takes on many more aspects of formal composition. Children have a growing awareness of others, so their writing can be molded according to the intended audience. They have a good idea of story patterns, so their writing takes the structure of a beginning, middle, and end. They begin to incorporate their own ideas into their writing, so originality begins to appear. They begin to form concepts of grammar and mechanics as well as experiment with punctuation, word choice and sentence structure. Instruction should focus on trying many different TYPES OF WRITING for different audiences; therefore, experimenting with various forms and taking risks should be encouraged rather than merely looking for and correcting errors. Mistakes often suggest growth is taking place.

Students need time for writing everyday. In as much as children develop at different rates, not all children can be expected to write at the same developmental level. Writing time should take these individual differences into account. Because some students will take more time in some areas, writing time should be viewed as a rotating activity, i.e., students will be on different STAGES of WRITING at different times. Following are some ideas to keep in mind when implementing writing:

- Children need time to develop ideas during the PREWRITING stage. They need to discover what they want to say, what their audience needs, and how to say it. Provide many activities and sufficient time for this important stage.

- Students need time and opportunities to share ideas and plans during the PREWRITING and DRAFTING stages. Children should learn to bounce ideas off each other. Time should be provided for them to explore ideas orally.

- Student topics should include many TYPES OF WRITING. Choosing a topic is very important for children. Many topics for writing should be student generated. Students will be much more committed to their writing if they have ownership of their ideas. Topics for writing can be generated from ideas explored in journals. Students can also maintain a page of possible topics in their writing folders. Other writing topics can come from reading assignments or class discussions.

- Consider most first writing as a rough draft. Some writing may never progress past this stage, but other pieces will need to go through several drafts before completion. During these stages, the teacher needs to CONFERENCE with students as the need arises.

- The ultimate goal for all students is to enable them to become their own critics and editors. Teachers should first model CONFERENCE questions to their students and then let students do their own evaluations or peer conferencing. Feedback is important to all writers. By letting them share their ideas in groups or with partners, students become more aware of problems and how to handle them.

- Model REVISION and EDITING strategies for students to practice alone, in small groups, or with partners. A major responsibility is to help students learn to evaluate their own work according to logical development; sequence; openings and closings; capitalization, punctuation, and grammar rules; legibility of handwriting; and spelling. The EDITING stage is the most opportune time to teach these skills with individual students, small groups, or the total class.

- SHARE/PUBLISH the students' writing as much as possible. As children share their writing, they develop feelings of pride, competence, acceptance, and importance in the writing act.

(Capitalized words refer to other sections of the handbook. Refer to the sections and ACTIVITIES for more information and suggestions.)

Seventh-Twelfth Grade

In addition to the suggestions made for K-2 and 3-6 students, writing instruction during these years should focus on "what" and "how" students write. Rather than simply requiring more writing activities, students need to be provided more effective ways to carry out more challenging assignments in which reading and writing tasks are integrated into their work throughout the curriculum. Writing activities should require high levels of student interaction concentrating on structured problem-solving tasks with clear objectives to enable students to deal with similar problems in composing.

Students should be exposed to a variety of TYPES OF WRITING: expressive, transactional, and poetic; however, instruction should focus on strategies which students will actually use in writing tasks. For example, specific criteria or revision sheets can be made which require students to find and state specific details which convey personal experience vividly, to examine data to develop and support generalizations, or to analyze situations which present problems and develop arguments or solutions to them.

As the ETS report, the Writing Report Card: Writing Achievement in American Schools (1986), states, "The act of successful teaching of writing involves helping students think about what to do and how to do it as they are engaged in the process of writing -- and students need this kind of support in all their subjects, each and every day (p. 13)."

STAGES OF WRITING

The act of writing involves a process of several distinct stages. These stages, however, sometimes overlap as the student works through the piece of writing. Writing tends to be a recursive process involving a cycle of planning, writing, and revising; and many times this cycle leads the writer to more planning, writing, and revising. It is important for students to know that the ideas they pull together can be modified or changed at any point in the writing process. The writing process consists of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

Prewriting

The first stage of the writing process involves the planning stage or the prewriting stage. Prewriting is essential to the success of any writing. Prewriting skills are necessary in order for students to become capable writers. Prewriting is everything that takes place before the first draft; the purpose of this stage is to allow writers to generate and explore possible topics, to determine the purpose of their writing, to decide on a specific audience for their writing, to organize their ideas, and to decide on the format of writing that is to be followed. Prewriting can involve such activities as brainstorming, journal writing, discussion, making lists, webbing, interviewing, drawing, or research.

Drafting

The second stage of the writing process involves students writing the ideas formulated during the prewriting stage. After having had ample time to brainstorm by discussing and sharing thoughts, the first drafting stage should begin. Getting all ideas down on paper is the main objective at this point. The student writer should be encouraged to write without worrying about spelling, grammar, punctuation, or neatness. Fluency, the easy and logical flow of words in oral and written communication, should be the main focus. Nothing should interfere with the flow of ideas onto the paper. Students will discover that they have much to say.

By observing each writer closely, the teacher can identify those who are fluent and those who struggle from word to word. Less fluent writers need constant reassurance that their work is acceptable. The teacher must explain that all ideas are important and discourage indiscriminate editing and revision at this stage because it hampers the creative thought process. It should be noted, however, that some students will edit as they go along -- it's automatic. For some, this can be done without breaking thought patterns; but for most, the flow of ideas will be interrupted.

These less fluent writers should be reminded that writing is a process. Everything written at this point serves only as a draft. They are providing the material that will later suggest the substance for a finished piece. Teachers can improve their students' ability to write fluently by requiring them to write daily and extensively and in more than one subject area.

As fluency develops, other concerns such as observing language conventions, addressing specific purposes, and writing to specific audiences can be considered.

By sharing the agonizing stage of first draft writing, teachers and students function as models for each other and create an atmosphere of trust.

Revising

Once the student has completed a first draft, the next step in the writing process is revision. The major goal of revision is to achieve meaning and form. In this stage the writer must know what information to communicate, know the intended audience, organize this information in an orderly manner, choose appropriate words and examples to express meaning, and discard anything which does not contribute to the meaning. In order to do these things, the writer must step back from the writing and become a critical reader who sees the paper from the intended audience's perspective. By reseeing the paper from another standpoint (hence re-vision), the writer can judge whether the writing clearly expresses its intended meaning and achieves its purpose.

Editing

In the beginning stages of writing, the student is concerned with content and meaning. After a student is satisfied with the content, editing and proofreading begin. The goal here is not to change the text as much as it is to polish the text for the intended audience. In this stage the primary concern is to make the text more readable and to correct errors. Each student must develop a personal strategy to eliminate errors. This strategy might include using rules learned; using reference books to check unfamiliar rules of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage; or using peer editing groups. Developing a personal strategy will enable the student to complete the editing stage.

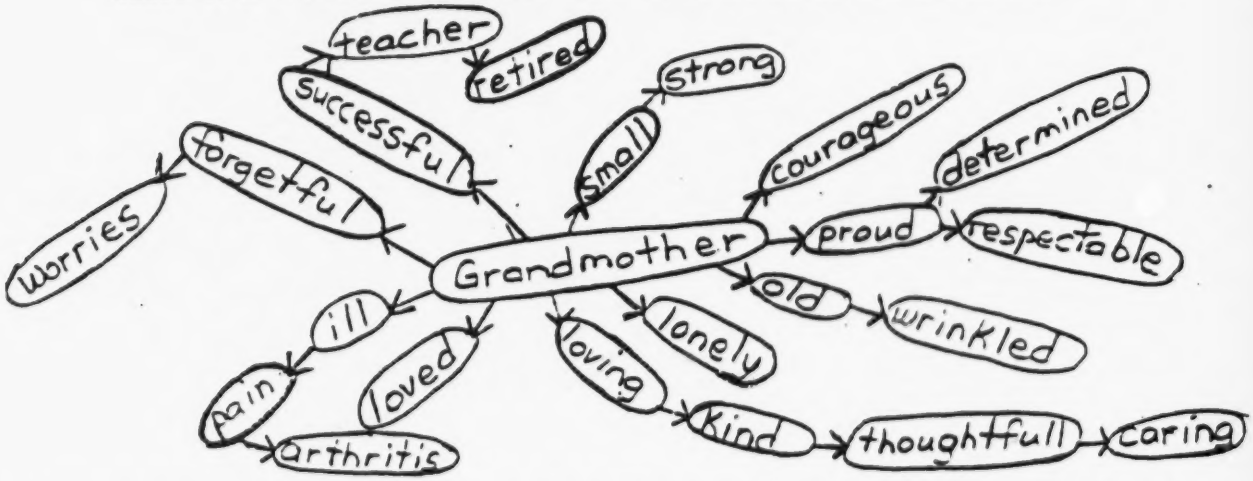
Sharing/Publishing

Sharing and publishing are extremely important in the writing process and should be used by all students. By sharing and publishing students gain confidence, pride, and enjoyment in their writing abilities as well as take their writing more seriously. Motivation to write more effectively also increases when works are shared, displayed, and published. Sharing begins when students read their writings to family, friends, and classmates in a safe environment. Small group sharing can lead to new suggestions and revisions of ideas to clarify writing before publishing. Displaying and sharing works should be chosen at first on the interest of the writing, not its correctness. Publishing also allows the parents, students, teachers, and administrators to see the students' progress.

PREWRITING ACTIVITIES

1. Brainstorming - Brainstorming among group members is an excellent way to generate ideas and motivate students to write from their own experiences as well as encourage constructive interaction among class members. By allowing their thoughts to flow freely on a given topic, students discover new ideas, and group discussion helps to clarify their own thoughts.

2. Webbing - One type of individual brainstorming that involves a creative search is known as webbing or clustering. A word uppermost in the student's mind is written down in the center of a blank sheet of paper and circled. From this main word, other related words that connect with it are written down. As the student continues to cluster, there should be a shift from a sense of disorder to a sense of order and direction.



3. Outlining - Outlining enables students to organize their thoughts and ideas in a logical manner (See Prewriting Worksheet, p. 51).

4. Listing - Students can make lists on topics of interest. These lists can be topics for later writing.

5. Values Clarification - A good way to stimulate student thought is to give each student a list of values and have them rank them in order of importance. When all students have ranked the values, have them discuss their reasons for their rankings. The reasons and examples brought up in discussion may be used as future topics for writing.

   Pleasure
   Health
   Wealth
   Wisdom
   World Peace
   Love
   Self-respect
   Freedom
   Happiness
   Power

6. Journal Writing - Have students write in a notebook three to four times a week recording their ideas, sensory impressions, thoughts, and feelings. The journal becomes a storehouse of topics and ideas for more formal writing. It is a type of brainstorming with oneself that provides a personal record that can aid students in discovering patterns of thought. The journal entries are not graded, but some type of credit should be given for the journal writing activity. The topics for writing should be student generated as much as possible.

7. Idea Starters - Students can get ideas for writing when they are exposed to new situations or when they see ordinary situations in a new or different way. Ideas can come from films, field trips, poetry, art, photography, music, books, or guest speakers. As the class discusses ideas, students are encouraged to develop their writing in a variety of ways.

   - Show students a picture and have them create a story based on what they see.
   - Show students part of film and have them create an appropriate ending.
   - Have students create a different ending for a story they have read.

8. Studying Other Writer's Writing - Students can get a better understanding of how to approach their own writing and how to work out certain problems with their writing when they study or analyze the writing of professional writers or other students.

9. Interview - Students can obtain opinions, ideas, and information for writing from others through the interview. Other students, teachers, parents, or experts on a topic may be interviewed.

(See The Foxfire Book, Anchor Press: Doubleday; Garden City, New York 1972, pp. 10-12.)

10. Freewriting - Students can find subjects to write about through freewriting exercises. Freewriting is sometimes referred to as "automatic" writing or "stream of consciousness" writing. The idea is to write for five to ten minutes without stopping to edit at least three times a week. Stopping to edit interferes with the free flow of words and ideas. The student is to write down whatever comes to mind. Keep the pencil moving! Scribbling, repetition of letters, phrases, or words are all freewriting. The main requirement is to never stop writing during the freewriting period. Freewriting activities will make writing less difficult because eventually words should come more easily.

11. Focused Freewriting - Students write nonstop for five to ten minutes on a specific topic in order to determine their ideas and feelings on the given topic.

PREWRITING WORKSHEET

_____

THESIS STATEMENT: _____

_____

I. LIST THE FIRST MAIN POINT YOU WILL DISCUSS: _____

LIST ALL THE DETAILS YOU HAVE TO SUPPORT THIS IDEA:

A.

B.

C.

D.

II. LIST THE SECOND MAIN POINT YOU WILL DISCUSS: _____

LIST ALL THE DETAILS YOU HAVE TO SUPPORT THIS IDEA:

A.

B.

C.

D.

III. LIST THE FINAL MAIN POINT YOU WILL DISCUSS: _____

LIST ALL THE DETAILS YOU HAVE TO SUPPORT THIS IDEA:

A.

B.

C.

D.

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Questions to Determine Purpose

1. Why do I want to write about this topic? _____

2. Is my purpose to **inform** my readers of something or **explain** something to them? _____

3. Is my purpose to **persuade** them to change their minds about something or take some action?

4. Is my purpose to **amuse** or **entertain** them? _____

5. Is my purpose to **narrate** a story of some kind? _____

6. Is my purpose to **describe** something or someone? _____

7. Do I have some other, more specific purpose in mind? For instance, do I want to describe a movie in order to persuade my readers to see it?

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Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Questions About Audience

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1. Am I writing for a general audience or a special audience (such as a group of experts or schoolchildren)?	
2. What do I want to say to this particular audience?	
3. How much does this audience know about my subject? What other information shall I give them?	
4. What details about my topic will interest this audience most?	
5. What preconceptions and objections might this audience have regarding my topic? How can I counter these?	
6. What techniques will help me accomplish my purpose?	

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Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Listing Steps in a Process

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1. For what audience am I writing?	
2. What are the steps in the process?	
3. Should the order of any steps be changed?	
4. Can any steps be mentioned together?	
5. Does my audience need any more information to understand the process?	

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Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Observation Table

Subject: _____

SIGHTS	SOUNDS	SMELLS/TASTES	TOUCH/ MOVEMENTS

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Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Ideas For Creative Writing

Chart of Story Ideas

SITUATION/PROBLEM	CHARACTER(S)	SETTING

Chart of Scene Ideas

FIRST CHARACTER	SECOND CHARACTER	CONFLICT

Chart for Collecting Images

ITEM	SENSE	IMAGE
	Sight	
	Sound	
	Smell	
	Taste	
	Touch	

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Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Outline Form

TOPIC _____

Main topic I. _____

Subtopic A. _____

Supporting details 1. _____

2. _____

Subtopic B. _____

Supporting details 1. _____

2. _____

Subtopic C. _____

Supporting details 1. _____

2. _____

Main topic II. _____

Subtopic A. _____

Supporting details 1. _____

2. _____

Subtopic B. _____

Supporting details 1. _____

2. _____

Subtopic C. _____

Supporting details 1. _____

2. _____

Main topic III. _____

Subtopic A. _____

Supporting details 1. _____

2. _____

Subtopic B. _____

Supporting details 1. _____

2. _____

Subtopic C. _____

Supporting details 1. _____

2. _____

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DRAFTING ACTIVITIES

1. Journal or Diary - Set aside a few minutes of class to write with the students. Journals and diaries are extremely appropriate for this activity. Make it clear that during this time no one is to disturb others. You might tell them what you are going to write about and why. Seeing an adult write and writing themselves allows students to see that writing can actually be a way to express inner thoughts. Explain to students that no one will read these thoughts, however, unless they allow it. This activity enables students to reflect and discover things about themselves.

2. Learning Logs - This activity is a useful way for all subject area teachers to determine student understanding of lessons, concepts, and skills. This student - maintained log provides an opportunity for students to reveal what they know and to point out any problems or questions they may have about the lesson. (See Learning Log, p. 54). A meaningful dialogue is established between the student and teacher when the teacher responds to the entries. The teacher may respond with written and/or oral comments, altered lesson plans or strategies, and remediation activities.

Sample of a Learning Log

Student	Teacher
11-15-86 Today we discussed the events leading up to the Civil War. It seems more complicated than I thought it was. I really liked the group discussion. I hope we do that some more.	Good! I plan to!
11-20-86 I didn't do very well on today's quiz. I can't remember the names of the men and places each battle was fought.	Check pages 290-293 in text - See if that will help.

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3. Descriptive Draft - Write a descriptive piece in which details are used to describe a person or pet that you love. Explain that the assignment is to be titled "My True Love's Face." Rather than revealing personality or over-all body features, concentrate only on the details of the face. You are not to identify the "true love" by name. Keeping the identity secret is part of the fun. Later, after all stages of writing are complete, a student is selected to draw a picture of the "true love," using only the final draft as a guide.

4. Modeling - Use large sheets of paper, the overhead projector, or the chalkboard to model the drafting process. Students get a chance to see the teacher's or other students' writing in progress. During this time the students and teacher discuss the drafting process.

LEARNING LOG

A Learning Log is a notebook for recording things students have learned in class or for writing down thoughts and ideas. It is a way of discovering what students know and using what they have learned.

Establish a routine for students to write in class in their Learning Log. Have them write each day for 5 minutes at the end of class. Have students keep their Learning Logs in a separate notebook or binder. Students can then use their Learning Logs as study guides before a quiz or test. Teachers can use the Logs as a diagnostic or evaluative instrument. Read the student's Learning Logs periodically (do not grade) to check for understanding. Reteach lessons as necessary.

IDEAS FOR LOGS

Here are some things students can write about in their Learning Logs:

- reactions to what you have learned
- ideas for compositions or stories
- a list of words you may need
- ideas and observations
- responses to a poem, book, TV show, or movie
- something learned from a science experiment
- the most important thing that happened to you in the past month
- something you're looking forward to
- what you imagine yourself doing in the future
- qualities you most admire about your best friend

REVISING ACTIVITIES

1. Teacher Demonstration - The teacher uses the overhead or chalkboard to demonstrate revisions of sample papers. The sample may be a teacher or student paper.

2. Study of Early Drafts of Famous Writers - A comparison of early and final drafts dispels the idea that the good writer does not have to revise. Students can discuss changes made and offer alternatives that the writer could have and did make.

3. Teacher Conferences - A conference can help direct student revision by discussing strengths and weaknesses of the paper.

4. Student Revision Groups - The revision group listens to the writer reading a paper and then discusses general impressions, strong points, and areas of confusion. The focus is on the paper as a whole and not on editing and mechanics. Requiring that the groups be positive in nature ensures that the group provides support and encouragement to the writer.

5. Tutoring - A student with skills in a particular area is paired with a student who shows weaknesses in that area.

6. Clinics - Students with similar problems are grouped together and given extra help and practice in areas of weakness.

7. Displays - The teacher displays actual student papers which have been revised. These messy first drafts show students how changes are made in the original draft.

8. Word Processors - Using the computer makes revision an exciting task and not a dreaded chore. The easy-to-read text encourages further revision. The word processor saves time for students who tend to rewrite the entire paper with every change. Two word processing programs are the Bankstreet Writer and the Writing Assistant.

9. Process Log - Students write about their own writing. They keep track of what goes on throughout the stages of writing. They may record frustrations and problems encountered, choices and changes that were made, and general progress. The log may be kept for a particular paper or for a specified time period. The log helps students become aware of their own habits and patterns as a writer.

10. Self-diagnosis - Students are asked to evaluate their own writing. Assuming responsibility for their own revision is the goal toward which students should work.

SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST

1. Is my paper interesting and clear?

2. Do I need to add information or supply more details/examples?

3. Did I stick to the main idea?

4. Are my ideas arranged in the best order?

5. Did I use complete sentences?

6. Did I indent every paragraph?

7. Did I begin every sentence with a capital letter?

8. Did I end each sentence with proper punctuation (period, questions mark, or exclamation point)?

9. Have I checked for misspelled words?

10. Have I avoided using and or but to begin a sentence?

11. Have I used specific, exact words?

12. Am I satisfied with what I have written?

HAVING A WRITING CONFERENCE WITH YOURSELF

Questions about Enough Information

Have I told where, when, and with whom this is happening?

Have I clearly explained what I mean? Is there any part that might confuse my reader?

Have I described the scene and people so well that my reader can see and hear my story?

Do people talk? Have I put quotation marks around the words people say out loud?

Have I used examples to show what I mean, instead of just telling?

What's the most exciting or interesting part of the piece? How can I build on it?

Questions about Too Much Information

What parts aren't needed -- don't add to my point or story? Can I cross them out?

What is this piece really about? Are there parts that are about something else? Can I cross them out?

Do I have more than one story here? Which is the one story I really want to tell?

Is this a "bed-to-bed" piece, going through every event of a day? Can I keep the important part of the day and cross out the unimportant parts?

Is there too much conversation? too many little details? Have I explained too much?

Questions about Beginnings

Does my beginning bring my reader right into the action of the story or my main ideas?

Where does my piece really get going? Can I cross out the first paragraph? the first page?

Questions about Endings

Does my ending leave my reader wondering?

Does my ending go on and on?

How do I want my reader to <u>feel</u> at the end? Does this ending do it?

What do I want my reader to <u>know</u> at the end? Does this ending do it?

Questions about Titles

Does my title fit what my piece is about?

Is my title a "grabber"? Would it make a reader want to read my piece?

Questions about Style

Have I said something more than once?

Have I used any words too often (such as <u>and</u>, <u>then</u>, or <u>said</u>)?

Are any sentences too long and tangled up? too short and chopped up?

Have I paragraphed or indented often enough to give my reader's eyes some breaks? Have I broken up my piece by paragraphing too much?

Is this the way things happened, in this order? Have I grouped together ideas that belong together?

Does the voice telling the story stay the same -- <u>I</u> or <u>he</u> or <u>she</u>?

Does the verb tense stay the same -- <u>present</u> (I am doing it now) or <u>past</u> (I did it before)?

* From: Nancy Atwell, <u>LiveWire</u>, December 1984.

PEER REVISION FORM

Name of evaluator _____

Author of paper being evaluated _____

What was the main idea of this paper?

What was the best thing about this paper? Be specific!

What suggestions could you offer the writer to improve this paper?

On a range of 1-10, with 5 being average and 10 being excellent, how would you rate this paper? _____

Tell specifically why you gave the paper this score.

SAMPLE OF A PROCESS LOG ENTRY

I really had a lot of trouble with this paper. I couldn't think of what I wanted to write about at first. Finally I started writing about winning a wrestling match last fall. I decided that was what I really wanted to write about. Later on I went back and got rid of the first part when I was writing about school in general. It's funny that I couldn't think of anything to write about, but then an idea just came to me as I was writing. After I came up with my topic, I didn't have a lot more trouble.

Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Checklist for Revising a Paragraph

Purpose and Audience

1. Which sentence or sentences, if any, do not directly fulfill the purpose of the paragraph? _____

Topic sentence

3. Should I revise the topic sentence? _____

Support, Development, and Organization

5. Which details, facts, examples, or reasons form the strongest support for my main idea? Which sentence or sentences, if any, merely repeat the main idea? _____

Coherence

7. Which words can I repeat and still give my sentences sufficient variety? What synonyms can I use? _____

Word Choice

10. Which words, if any, are not appropriate to the audience, to the occasion, and to the subject? _____

Editing, Proofreading, and Publishing

12. Do all verbs and subjects agree? _____
13. Is every pronoun in the correct case? Is every pronoun reference correct and clear? _____
14. Are all double negatives avoided? _____
15. Is each verb tense correct and consistent? _____
16. Are all comparisons properly expressed? _____

2. What changes should be made to make every sentence understandable? _____

4. What revision would improve the topic sentence? _____

6. Why is the method of organization used in the paragraph the best possible one? _____

8. Which pronouns can I use to achieve coherence and conciseness? _____

9. What kinds of transitions can I use? _____

11. Which words or expressions, if any, are inconsistent with the others? _____

17. Are all clauses complete and properly joined? _____
18. Have all dangling or misplaced words been avoided? _____
19. Has all redundancy or wordiness been avoided? _____
20. Has all proofreading been done? _____
21. Have the rules of manuscript preparation been followed? _____

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Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Checklist for Writing a Unified Paragraph

1. In what specific way does each supporting sentence relate to the main idea stated in the topic sentence? _____

2. If a sentence is not directly related to the topic sentence, should I delete it, revise the topic sentence, or save the sentence for another paragraph? _____

Checklist for Writing a Coherent Paragraph

1. What can I do to link all the sentences in the paragraph clearly and logically? _____

2. Which words can I repeat and still give my sentences sufficient variety? What synonyms can I use? _____

3. Does each pronoun clearly refer to a word, a group of words, or an idea that appears in another sentence? _____

4. What are the best transitions I can use to link the sentences? _____

Checklist for Organizing a Paragraph

1. a. Should this paragraph be organized in chronological order? _____
   b. If so, what is the sequence of events? _____

2. a. Should this paragraph be organized in spatial order? _____
   b. If so, how shall I let my readers know my position and direction? _____

3. a. Should this paragraph be organized in cause-and-effect order? _____
   b. If so, what is the cause? What is the effect? _____

4. a. Should this paragraph be organized in comparison-and-contrast order? _____
   b. If so, what similarities and differences should I relate? _____

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Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Checklist for Explaining a Process

1. a. Which steps in the process should be added to my explanation? _____

   b. Which ones can be omitted or grouped together? _____

2. Are the steps presented in the most logical order? _____

3. What can I do to make this process clearer to my readers? _____

4. What transitions would add to the coherence of my writing? _____

5. a. Is each sentence a complete sentence? _____

   b. Have I avoided errors in verbs, pronouns, and modifiers? _____

6. a. Have I correctly capitalized and punctuated each sentence? _____

   b. Are all the words correctly spelled? _____

7. What might be a good way of presenting my writing to my intended audience? Reading it to them? Writing a letter? _____

Checklist for Cause and Effect

1. Where have I identified the causes or effects related to the event or condition on which I am focusing? _____

2. Is the relationship that I present a true cause-and-effect relationship? _____

3. a. Which, if any, causes or effects should I add? _____

   b. Which should I delete? _____

4. a. What can I do to make clearer the connection between each cause and its effect? _____

   b. What transitions can I add? _____

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Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Checklist for Revising Persuasive Writing

1. What is my purpose? What do I want to persuade the reader to think or do? _____

2. a Is my opinion worth defending? _____
   b. Can I persuade readers to accept it? _____
   c. Do I have to? _____

3. a. What qualities in my audience do I want to keep in mind as I write? _____
   b. What kinds of support are most likely to persuade them? _____

4. a. Which pieces of evidence are facts, which are sound opinions, and which are authoritative statements? _____
   b. Are there any unsound opinions? _____

5. What revisions are necessary to make sure that my opening statement is clear, specific, and directed toward my purpose? _____

6. a. What method of organization have I used to present my argument? _____
   b. Which transitions make my argument easy for readers to follow? _____
   c. Would another method of organization be preferable? _____

7. How clearly is my conclusion stated? _____

8. Have I used any faulty methods of persuasion—loaded words, bandwagon, testimonial, red herring, or the either-or error? _____

English Study and Composition Blackline Masters G9 Scribner/Macmillan

Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Checklist for Revising an Essay

1. a. What am I trying to tell my audience?

   b. Will my audience understand my attitude toward the topic?

2. How do the points I discuss support the thesis?

3. a. Which points are most important to me?

   b. Do they need to be developed more or introduced earlier?

4. Which points can I discard?

5. What is strong and what is weak about my organization?

6. How well or poorly do my ideas connect with one another?

7. How can my introduction and conclusion be improved?

8. What can I do to vary sentence structure and sentence length?

9. What adjustments should I make in grammar, usage, word choice, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation?

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EDITING ACTIVITIES

1. Class Practice - The teacher duplicates a sample paper with numerous mistakes in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage. The class works together on the paper to improve proofreading skills.

2. Checklists - Students are given checklists to use as aids for proofreading.

3. Personal Lists of Errors - Students are urged to keep a list of spelling demons and the capitalization, punctuation, or usage rules that they do not know. Using writing samples or conferencing is a good way to identify these problem areas. Any word or rule that the student must look up during the writing process is recorded in a journal or folder. The teacher continues to make suggestions for the list after evaluating student work. These lists can help lessen dependency on dictionaries and other reference books during the editing process.

4. Peer Editing - Students either work in groups or exchange papers individually. In this way each student is able to share knowledge and help other writers identify errors.

5. Computer Programs - Students can use programs such as Spell Check to help edit the paper.

SHARING/PUBLISHING ACTIVITIES

1. Tape writings for oral library or listening centers.

2. Mail letters to pen pals, friends, or family.

3. Create poems for birthday cards to give to friends.

4. Display works on bulletin boards in the classroom and around the school in the hall, library, or cafeteria.

5. Read writings over the intercom.

6. Read writings in student's class and other classes.

7. Compile writings in a scrapbook or other bound forms.

8. Compile and send writings to school adoptors.

9. Share writings with newspapers, radio, and television.

10. Share writings at school programs or PTO meetings.

11. Write a family newspaper and share it with your family.

12. Display writings in libraries, malls, and other public places.

13. Reproduce writings for a class publication.

14. Enter writings in a variety of contests.

15. Present writings as a song, play, or pantomime.

16. Conduct sharing circles for five to eight minutes after every writing period. Everyone does not have to share at this time. The teacher comments on students' writing using students' actual words and phrases.

THE EARLY STAGES OF WRITING

The early stages of writing include oral language, handwriting, spelling, and grammar. These stages of writing can also be described as the developmental stages of writing. The young child uses oral language to express thoughts that cannot yet be expressed through written language. As a child's ideas move from simple to complex, writing skills are developed. The major function of oral or written language is communication. Writing becomes more fluent as the gap between speech and writing decreases.

ORAL LANGUAGE

Oral language provides a foundation for a young child's writing. A child who is very verbal will most likely write more than a child who is less verbal. The young child is sometimes motivated to speak (write) by a kind of play which involves telling make-believe stories. For example: "A dog says meow, and a cat says ruff ruff." Language experiences can be used with the young child before writing because a tremendous amount of talk occurs before the young child writes even a few words.

HANDWRITING

Students need the following prewriting skills: small muscle development, eye-hand coordination, holding a writing tool, making basic strokes, letter perception, and orientation to printed language. These skills are composite parts of the written and oral language arts program and should be integrated within the teaching process.

Handwriting improves when students are allowed to write everyday on personal topics and can share or exchange writings with classmates. Thus, writing is for pleasure instead of just being another assignment. During the editing stage of writing, teachers can help students to identify areas of weakness in handwriting. At first students feel that their first draft is the best, but as they mature, they begin crossing out words and erasing. Students begin writings very neatly, but after several errors their writing becomes messy and revision is needed. Students become more interested in mechanics, spelling, and punctuation by the end of first grade; thus, quality of writing improves.

By the middle of second grade, students are eager to learn cursive writing. Manuscript and cursive writing should be taught only when the student is ready. The D'Nealian approach will make this transition less traumatic.

SPELLING

The younger child develops different types of spelling by inventing words, letters, and symbols. The child begins to form letters as development progresses and invents spelling on the basis of how the word sounds or how the child thinks the word sounds. The invented spelling stages can be labeled as prephonemic, early phonemic, letter name, and transitional.

During the prephonemic spelling stage, the child knows most of the letters but has not discovered the phonemic principal of associating letters with sounds. The prephonemic speller usually has not learned to read; therefore, he does not understand the association between letters and sounds.

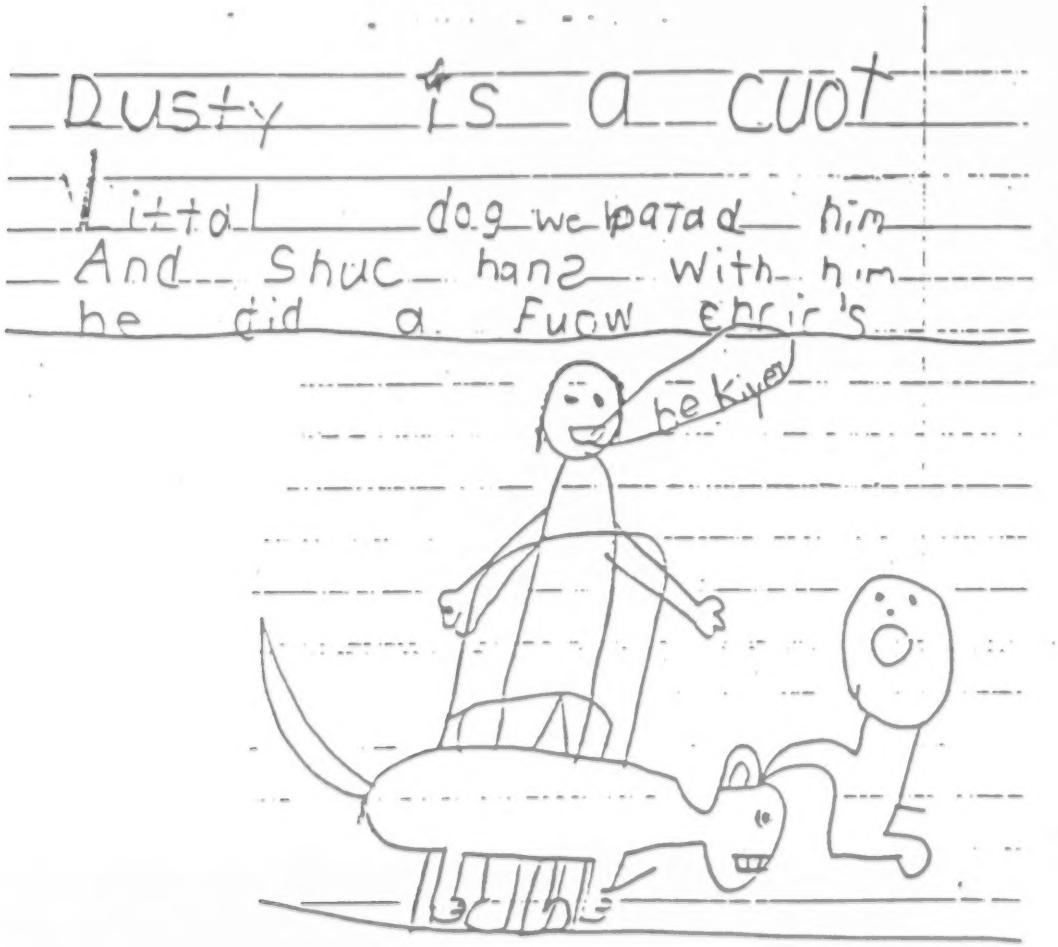
Example:

My dog outside barking. (Prephonemic)

Children progress to the early phonemic stage of spelling when an attempt has been made to represent phonemes with words and letters. The child will usually write down only one or two sounds in the word and then stop, thereby limiting the child's ability to spell. The child is also limited to the time that a word can be "held still in the mind." The child's spelling process and progress are slowed down because of the many rules involved.

"I love the dog Dusty.
He do many kinds of tricks
and I love Dusty."
(Early Phonemic)

A child gradually moves on to the letter-naming stage often without notice. Letter naming is the process of breaking a word into its phonemes and representing the phonemes with letters of the alphabet. The child continues to represent more and more phonemes as some become mastered. The letter-naming spellers are often non-readers. As they move toward reading, the children begin to understand the differences between their way of spelling and standard spelling.



Dusty is a cute little dog.
We patted him and shook
hands with him. He did a
few tricks."
(letter-naming)

The transitional stage begins as the child moves toward standard spelling. The child has an understanding of some rules of spelling, but the spelling is still not always correct. During this stage children show an understanding of some spelling rules and begin to use conventional spellings.

my berthta is in January it is the 15 of January I wat evye biy to comz grli I am gne to have it at home.

(Transitional)

GRAMMAR

The implementation of writing instruction should not be delayed just because students have not mastered basic grammar and reading skills. Just as parents encourage beginning oral speech, teachers should support children by encouraging them to write before they can spell, use proper grammar, or even print well.

Grammar is a growth process in which the child moves slowly from simple to complex, or immature to mature speech and writing. Children formulate rules from sentences they hear in order to create similar sentences. The perception of rules changes as the child hears differences in sentences. Gradually children's perceived rules change resulting in more mature sentence formation. Errors give way to errors before children arrive at correct forms.

Drawing pictures and telling stories can be the beginning of writing. Children write consonant sounds or use invented spellings to express themselves. Grammar changes as students edit and revise their writings during speech and writing practices. Gramatical terms do not have to be used during conferencing but could be discussed in different ways to improve the writing. Formal grammar has no effect on the quality of writing unless it is related to students' own writing.

Grammar is more than the memorization of rules or definitions. It involves the thinking through of problems as they occur in the writing process. These problems create a need for the development of grammatical skills. Students should be given a variety of practical aids and many writing opportunities to improve these skills.

Grammatical analysis can be undertaken based on real writings produced by the students and discovered during the revising and editing stages. Practice is given through meaningful writing assignments and not just isolated exercises. Students can learn from each other and grow from each other's knowledge during peer editing and small group conferencing. Writing becomes a way of learning as students learn to write.

CONFERENCING

One vital aspect of the writing process is conferencing. The goal of the conference is to help the student write more effectively by establishing dialogue. A conference can be best described as a special time during which the student works one-on-one with you, in small groups with you, or with other students. The conferencing process should be used throughout grades K-12. You become the advocate of the child's writing by giving the child individual attention and encouragement. In order to accomplish these seemingly difficult tasks, the teacher needs to make time for conferencing.

TEACHER CONFERENCES

There are three types of conferences: the initial, scheduled, and group. The initial conference allows you to give suggestions to students who are experiencing difficulty getting started and may last only a matter of seconds. The scheduled conference monitors the individual student's progress. Setting time limits enables you to see as many students as possible. The group conference may involve any number of students and may last a matter of minutes. One reason for a group conference may be to teach a mini-lesson dealing with a specific problem occurring in a number of student papers. Another reason may be to clarify a particular aspect of the writing process or give further directions. All three types of conferences should be used in all stages from prewriting to publishing.

During teacher-led conferences, you may ask the student a series of questions about the writing. These questions should enable you and the student to discuss the writing without the student feeling threatened or inhibited. When you become more interested in the writing than in dictating changes, the student feels more secure to assume responsibility for the writing.

PEER CONFERENCES

Another type of conference is the peer conference in which students share their writing with each other. This conference allows students to become peer editors, learners, and teachers who react to each other's writing before the teacher evaluates the writing. Peer editing and conferencing may occur during all stages of writing.

CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

The following questions can be used during each stage of the writing process. These questions are not limited to each stage since the stages of the writing process overlap. You may discover other questions more suitable for individual students.

PREWRITING CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS YOUR SUBJECT?

2. WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE?

3. WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE?

4. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PICTURE.
   CAN YOU WRITE ABOUT YOUR PICTURE?

5. CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOUR WRITING?

6. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO WRITE ABOUT?

7. WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO?

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE . . . .?

9. WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR READER TO KNOW/LEARN FROM YOUR WRITING?

11. WHERE DID YOU GET THE IDEA FOR THIS?

12. WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

DRAFTING CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS THE FEELING IN THIS PIECE?

2. WHAT ARE TWO STRONG WORDS IN THIS PIECE?

3. DID YOU DEVELOP YOUR THESIS ADEQUATELY?

4. IS YOUR PURPOSE CLEAR?

5. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR WRITING.

6. WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO NEXT?

7. DOES YOUR BEGINNING GRAB THE READER'S ATTENTION?

8. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR WRITING SO FAR?

9. WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT IDEA YOU WANT TO CONVEY?

10. WHERE ARE YOU GOING WITH THIS PIECE?

11. WHAT WERE YOUR PREWRITING ACTIVITIES?

REVISION CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

1. IN WHAT WAYS DOES YOUR DRAFT SAY WHAT YOU WANT IT TO SAY?

2. WILL THE READER UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY?

3. WHY DID YOU DO THIS?

4. DOES YOUR BEGINNING CATCH THE READER'S ATTENTION?

5. DOES THE ENDING DO WHAT YOU WANT IT TO DO?

6. WHAT PARTS NEED SOME WORK?

7. HOW DID YOU DO THAT?

8. WHY DID YOU DO IT THIS WAY?

9. WHICH PARTS WORK SO WELL THAT YOU WANT TO DO MORE WITH THEM?

10. WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST SO FAR?

11. CAN YOU TELL ME MORE ABOUT THIS?

12. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO CHANGE THIS WORD TO _____?

EDITING CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

1. IS YOUR NAME ON YOUR PAPER?

2. HAVE YOU NUMBERED THE PAGES?

3. DOES YOUR PAPER MAKE SENSE?

4. DOES YOUR PAPER HAVE A TITLE?

5. DOES YOUR PAPER HAVE THE DATE?

6. DID YOU MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE OVER AND OVER?

7. HAVE YOU HAD ANY PROBLEMS WITH YOUR PAPER?

8. WHERE ARE YOU HAVING TROUBLE?

9. CAN YOU EXPLAIN THIS PART?

10. WHAT GETS IN YOUR WAY WHEN YOU WRITE?

11. WERE THERE ANY PARTS THAT GAVE YOU CONCERN?

PUBLISHING CONFERENCING QUESTIONS

1. HAVE YOU CORRECTED YOUR ERRORS?

2. ARE YOUR PAGES IN THE CORRECT ORDER? NUMBERED?

3. IS YOUR WRITING ILLUSTRATED (IF NEEDED)?

4. DOES YOUR WRITING HAVE A TITLE?

5. DO YOU WANT TO MAKE YOUR WRITING INTO A BOOK?

6. HAVE YOU SHARED YOUR WRITING WITH SOMEONE ELSE?

7. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU THINK STILL NEEDS TO BE WORKED ON?

8. HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU FINISHED?

9. HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO FINISH YOUR WRITING?

10. WHAT PART DO YOU LIKE BEST?

PEER CONFERENCING

Purposes of peer conferencing:

1. To improve each student's ability to read, write, speak, listen, and think
2. To offer support to the writer
3. To provide specific suggestions for improvement

Guidelines for peer conferencing:

1. The writer reads the piece aloud once.
2. Everyone listens attentively to the reading.
3. During a second reading, peer group members make notes on response sheets.
4. Each peer group member gives a positive comment about the paper and offers constructive suggestions.
5. The response sheets are then given to the writer to consider in making revisions.

STUDY BUDDIES

(Peer Conferencing)

* FEEL SAFE
* BECOME COMFORTABLE
* BOOST CONFIDENCE
* INCREASE UNDERSTANDING
* ACT AS EDITORS

"Study Buddies" are groups of students who work together.

TYPES OF WRITING

Three types of writing are expressive, transactional, and poetic. The type of writing is influenced by the purpose and the intended audience. These types of writing are by no means mutually exclusive of each other. In fact, a piece of writing will often incorporate elements of the expressive, the transactional, as well as the poetic. Most writing begins as expressive writing and helps writers find out what they want to say.

Expressive writing has been called thinking aloud on paper. It tends to be personal writing that reveals the consciousness of the writer and establishes a close relationship with the listener or reader. Expressive writing reveals the thinking process that involves the free flow of ideas, is relatively unstructured, and tends to be very close to informal speech. Beginning writers rely heavily on expressive writing. As writing skills progress and develop, expressive writing becomes the basis of transactional or poetic writing. Examples of expressive writing include diaries, journals, personal letters, and first drafts.

Transactional writing uses language to get things done, such as to inform, to advise, to persuade, or to instruct. Because this type of writing is functional, it is often the most required. Examples of transactional writing include applications, résumés, business letters, registration cards, term papers, lab reports, essay tests, and book reviews.

Poetic writing is often called creative writing. How something is said becomes just as important as what is said. The writer selects words that represent ideas, feelings, and meanings to create an arrangement or formal pattern. The goal of poetic writing is to please or satisfy the writer. It exists for its own sake and not necessarily as a means of achieving something else. Examples of poetic writing include poetry, fiction, and drama.

One problem in discussing composition is the different terminology used to classify writing. As previously mentioned, expressive, transactional, and poetic writing primarily deal with the purpose of composition. However, composition can also be classified according to form and style - narration, description, exposition, and persuasion. These forms have traditionally been called the four modes of discourse and are found in many textbooks today. The traditional modes of discourse have been and can still be used as models; however, the purpose and intent determine the form and style the writer uses. Thus narration, description, exposition, and persuasion can be used in each type of writing. For example, expressive writing may include narration, description, exposition, and persuasion. Each type of writing, therefore, often makes use of any one of the four forms or any combination of these forms depending on the purpose. Obviously since form and purpose are so closely related, the writer must consider both.

Transactional ← Writing	Expressive → Writing	Poetic Writing
applications	journals	poetry
resumes	diaries	fiction
business and friendly letters	free writing	drama
reports	personal letters	lyrics
interviews	first drafts	puzzles
essays	responses to literature	
editorials	prophecy	
precis	memoir	
instructions/directions		
essay test answers		
advertisements		
registration cards		
term papers		
memos		
biographical sketch		
anecdotes		
requests		
telegrams		
commentaries		
proposals		
case studies		
reviews		
notes		
responses to literature		
written debate		
scripts		
puzzles		
prophecy		
memoir		
lists		
articles		
satires		
cartoons		
math problems		

EVALUATION

Perhaps the single most difficult yet necessary task facing teachers is evaluating student writing. It is difficult because it is an involved process. It involves not only teachers and students but also parents and administrators. It is necessary because educators need to determine several things. First, educators need to diagnose student writing abilities for planning and teaching; second, to monitor and measure growth and development; and last, to inform students, parents, and administrators of developments in writing abilities.

The two major methods of evaluating student writing are indirect methods and direct methods. Indirect methods involve fill-in-the-blank, multiple-choice, or isolated feature analysis questions that measure a student's knowledge of certain aspects of writing. Indirect methods are the traditional methods of grading. Indirect methods often are used in pretests for determining what should be taught and in posttests for testing a student's knowledge of specific facts after these facts have been taught. Indirect methods evaluate a student's knowledge of facts and writing rules but not necessarily a student's application and development of writing abilities.

On the other hand, direct methods require the student to produce a writing sample that is evaluated for such factors as organization, style, vocabulary, grammar, and tone. Direct methods examine a student's application of facts and rules, as well as exhibit the ability to write. Direct methods should function as additional proof that indirect methods and measures can be related to student writing.

Evaluation of writing should not be left strictly to the teacher. It can and should be a shared process. Since writing itself is a process, the evaluation of writing occurs at every level of the process. Involve the students! Let them help themselves, help each other, and help you. A portion of class time should be set aside for each step of the writing process. Consequently, students will be able to participate in self evaluation, peer evaluation, and teacher evaluation throughout each step of the writing process.

However, by evaluation we mean more than simply grading, for major differences separate the processes of grading, analysis, evaluation, and rating. Moreover, evaluation results are the most important aspects of performance to individual students, parents, teachers, and administrators. So, the major goal of evaluating writing for these parties should not be just to indirectly measure performance, application, and proficiency of isolated language skills with a grade. The evaluation of writing should also directly catalog, illustrate, and witness the development and application of writing skills. Teachers, as well as students, parents, and administrators, must therefore be willing to recognize and to use many different methods in the evaluation of student writing.

Ultimately, we must face the difficult yet necessary burden of evaluating student writing. We must also face the responsibility of concluding some grade from the written product. However, emphasis should be placed on the process as well as the product. Perhaps what we need is to become more conscious of and willing to use a multiplicity of methods and strategies. Indirect and direct methods must function hand-in-hand; and with the writing process approach, equal if not greater value must be given to direct methods in the evaluation of student writing.

EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

1. Writing Folders - By maintaining writing folders on each student, direct evaluation of student writing can be made. Everything an individual writes from prewriting through drafting, revising, and editing to final product can and should be kept in this folder. Students should turn in all these materials as proof of authorship. Keep all materials in chronological order. By doing this, we remind students that all stages of the writing process are important and necessary. We also stress to students, parents, and administrators the importance of each stage of the writing process. Most importantly, we will have a sound, direct basis for making any judgments concerning student writing.

   Suggestions:

   - Involve students in keeping the file.
   - Insist on all materials connected with any graded piece.
   - Use the file periodically to check growth, development, and ability levels.
   - Use the file as a catalog of developmental errors, mistake patterns, strengths, and weaknesses.
   - Use the files to develop lesson plans and teaching strategies.

2. Writing Samples - Every student should have on file an initial, a midterm, and an end-of-the-year writing sample. This sample should be an in-class, self-edited, final copy of a paragraph or composition. These student writings offer the best examples of individual developments in writing. Early in the year, this direct method can be used with indirect methods for planning individual, small group, and class lessons. These samples also serve as a catalog of student abilities, both strengths and weaknesses.

Suggestions:

- Do not grade these samples! Evaluate them.
- Evaluate the paragraph, essay, or composition on the basis of the student's five major error patterns or five major skill patterns.
- Offer students a single topic or limited choices.
- Limit the activity to a single class period.
- Compare and contrast samples three times a year to note developments.
- Use students' work to develop individual and peer checklists and evaluation devices.
- Plan teaching goals and strategies from your observations coupled with indirect methods.

NAME _____

ESSAY _____

REVISER'S CHECKLIST

OVERALL CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Does the introduction attract the audience and prepare for the thesis? _____
2. Is every idea in the thesis stated clearly and given appropriate emphasis? _____
3. Does the thesis statement indicate the structure of the essay? _____
4. Does the sequence of paragraphs follow the order established in the thesis? _____
5. Do the details, examples, and illustrations adequately support the ideas? _____

PARAGRAPHS:

1. Is every paragraph controlled by a topic sentence, either stated or implied? _____
2. Are the transitions between paragraphs adequate? _____

SENTENCES, PUNCTUATION, MECHANICS:

1. Are the sentences varied in length? _____
2. Are the sentences grammatically correct? _____
3. Have all comma splices, run-on sentences, and fragments been corrected? _____
4. Are commas placed before coordinating conjunctions joining independent clauses? _____
5.
6.
7.

CHECKED BY _____

* Note to checker: Circle the number of each question which the author needs to reconsider.

STUDENT ESSAY PROFILE

Enter a check (✓) if the student essay exhibits any of the problems listed below.

Student's name: _____ Class _____

Teacher's name: _____

	PRE-TEST	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	POST-
Date essay written										
Ideas										
Organization										
Sentence Structure										
Wording										
Punctuation, Mechanics, Spelling										
GROSS ERRORS:										
The Run-On Sentence										
The Sentence Fragment										
Incorrect Principal Parts of the Verb										
Lack of Agreement of Subject and Verb										
Incorrect Case of Pronoun										

Student _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Composition Evaluation Form

Teacher/Evaluator _____

Writing Assignment: _____

Strong Points: _____

Weak Points: _____

Matter to work on in next paper: _____

Composition Rating

	Low	Middle	High	
General Impression				
Ideas	2	4 6 8	10	
Organization and Paragraph Structure	2	4 6 8	10	
Word Choice	1	2 3 4	5	
Appropriateness of Tone	1	2 3 4	5	_____
Specifics				
Grammar and Usage	1	2 3 4	5	
Punctuation, Capitalization	1	2 3 4	5	
Spelling	1	2 3 4	5	
Manuscript Form	1	2 3 4	5	_____
			Total	_____

Adapted from Paul B. Diederich, *Measuring Growth in Writing* (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1974).

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Student _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Composition Evaluation Form

Teacher/Evaluator _____

Writing Assignment: _____

Strong Points: _____

Weak Points: _____

Matter to work on in next paper: _____

Composition Rating

	Yes	No	
I. Content			
	____	____	1. Insightful or original ideas
	____	____	2. Clearly expressed ideas
II. Organization			
	____	____	3. An obvious thesis
	____	____	4. Order of thesis ideas followed throughout composition
	____	____	5. Adequately developed thesis
	____	____	6. Every paragraph relevant to thesis
	____	____	7. Controlling idea in every paragraph
	____	____	8. Each paragraph developed with relevant details
	____	____	9. Well-ordered details
III. Grammar, Usage, Mechanics			
	____	____	10. Many misspellings
	____	____	11. Serious or excessive punctuation errors
	____	____	12. Errors in the use of verbs
	____	____	13. Errors in the use of pronouns
	____	____	14. Errors in the use of modifiers
	____	____	15. Errors in word usage
	____	____	16. Awkward sentences

Adapted from Arthur M. Cohen, "Assessing College Students' Ability to Write Compositions," *Research in the Teaching of English*, No. 5, 1971, pp. 24–36.

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ACTIVITIES

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

- Journal Writing - This activity can easily be done in all grades three or four times a week by recording ideas, impressions, thoughts, and feelings. In very early grades journals may involve more pictures and dictation. The journal entries are not graded, but some type of credit should be given for participation. Teachers should read journals periodically and add comments. The topics should primarily be student-generated but could be suggested by the teacher.

- Idea Starters - Teachers in any subject area can give students ways to begin writing. Some of the ideas for students to use can come from pictures, headlines, films, field trips, poetry, art, music, books, discussion, or guest speakers.

- Learning Logs - This activity encourages the student to interact with the content presented in class. Students are asked to respond to the lesson in writing. This log is not limited to a notebook where only notes, facts, statistics, definitions, or dates are recorded. Instead of simply recording facts, students are asked to become more involved with the facts. Students might choose to express confusion or ask questions. They may write how they feel about the lesson. The log is intended as a type of dialogue the student has with himself or with the teacher.

  Example:

  > I think I understood everything today except the way we were supposed to find the common denominator. I guess I need to reread pages 98 - 101 to see how it is done.

- Double - entry learning logs - This is a specific type of learning log in which students are asked to divide each page of the log vertically in order to leave a space for the teacher to respond to student entries. (See page 52)

- Essay questions - Teachers should give students opportunity to express what they know in written form. True/false, multiple choice, and matching test items often encourage guessing by the student. If students have knowledge in an area, they should be able to express that knowledge. Try to incorporate more essay and fill-in-the-blank type questions.

- Writing Calendar - Students will have a daily written assignment. The calendar offers the topics on which students write each day. Teachers may create a monthly calendar to correspond with lessons taught. The calendar enables students who are absent to know the daily writing assignment.

Writing Calendar

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
When you climbed into bed, your pillow whispered secrets. What did it say?	What do your friends like about you?	Traveling to a relative's home, you got on the wrong plane. Where did you go and what happened?	Why is the country of Italy shaped like a boot?	Student's Choice
Write directions for how to skip. Try them out to see if they work.	If I were only one inch tall . . .	After school, my teacher turns into . . .	The museum wants to display your desk and chair. Why?	What happened the day the clocks stopped?
Each night strange music is heard coming from the school. Why?	If you could have one magical ability, what would it be and why?	Student's Choice	The day the monster appeared in our lunchroom . . .	I know someone who might be famous one day because . . .
If I could visit another planet, I would visit _____ because . . .	Class Choice	How can you tell if someone you care about is worried?	How would your life be different if the world stopped turning and it was always night?	At midnight your best friend shakes you awake and says, "Come with me right away!" Why?

from: Live Wire
Mrs. L. Jones

- Subject area dictionary - Create a subject area dictionary. Each student works together to compile definitions for important words used in the class. This can be a year-long activity.

- Summary notes - Use the last 3-5 minutes of class to summarize what was learned in class. Students expressing ideas and concepts in their own words helps to clarify thoughts. This activity also lets the teacher know how well students understood the lesson and thereby make future instructional plans.

- Suggestion box - Teachers in any class could prepare a class suggestion box. Students are encouraged to ask questions or make suggestions. Teachers should read and respond to each note.

- Class book or scrapbook - This activity can be for a small group or the entire class. The project is based on the unit being studied. Each student is responsible for a portion of the book.

- Précis - Write a summary or précis of a difficult selection from your textbook. The summary should be about one-third the length of the original material. This activity will help students understand and remember the content of the selection.

- Course pamphlets - Create a pamphlet describing a particular course to share with other students interested in taking the course. Tell about the content and course requirements, but also include personal opinions and experiences.

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION

Business Letter Format (Modified Block Style)

heading

inside address

salutation

body

closing

signature

typed or printed name

Macmillan English Study and Composition Blackline Masters G9 Scribner/Macmillan

Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Application For Social Security Number

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Form Approved
OMB No. 0960-0066

FORM SS-5 — APPLICATION FOR A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER CARD (Original, Replacement or Correction)

MICROFILM REF. NO. (SSA USE ONLY)

Unless the requested information is provided, we may not be able to issue a Social Security Number (20 CFR 422-103(b))

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT ▶ Before completing this form, please read the instructions on the opposite page. You can type or print, using pen with dark blue or black ink. Do not use pencil.

NAA	NAME TO BE SHOWN ON CARD	First	Middle	Last
NAB 1	FULL NAME AT BIRTH (IF OTHER THAN ABOVE)	First	Middle	Last
ONA	OTHER NAME(S) USED			
MTT 2	MAILING ADDRESS	(Street/Apt. No., P.O. Box, Rural Route No.)		
CTY	CITY	STE STATE	ZIP	ZIP CODE

DSP 3 CITIZENSHIP (Check one only)
- ☐ a U.S. citizen
- ☐ b. Legal alien allowed to work
- ☐ c. Legal alien not allowed to work
- ☐ d. Other (See instructions on Page 2)

SEX 4
- ☐ MALE
- ☐ FEMALE

ETB 5 RACE/ETHNIC DESCRIPTION (Check one only) (Voluntary)
- ☐ a. Asian, Asian-American or Pacific Islander (includes persons of Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Samoan, etc., ancestry or descent)
- ☐ b. Hispanic (includes persons of Chicano, Cuban, Mexican or Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish ancestry or descent)
- ☐ c. Negro or Black (not Hispanic)
- ☐ d. Northern American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☐ e. White (not Hispanic)

DOB 6	DATE OF BIRTH ▶ MONTH	DAY	YEAR	AGE 7	PRESENT AGE	PLB 8	PLACE OF BIRTH ▶ CITY	STATE OR FOREIGN COUNTRY	FCI ☐
MNA 9	MOTHER'S NAME AT HER BIRTH	First	Middle					Last (Her maiden name)	
FNA	FATHER'S NAME	First	Middle					Last	

PNO 10
- a. Has a Social Security number card ever been requested for the person listed in item 1? ☐ YES(2) ☐ NO(1) ☐ Don't know(1) If yes, when: → MONTH YEAR
- b. Was a card received for the person listed in item 1? ☐ YES(3) ☐ NO(1) ☐ Don't know(1) **If you checked yes to a or b, complete items c through e; otherwise go to item 11.**
- c. Enter the Social Security number assigned to the person listed in item 1 ☐☐☐-☐☐-☐☐☐☐
- d. Enter the name shown on the most recent Social Security card issued for the person listed in item 1 — PDB — e. Date of birth correction (See instruction 10 on page 2) ▶ MONTH DAY YEAR

DON 11	TODAY'S DATE ▶ MONTH	DAY	YEAR	12	Telephone number where we can reach you during the day. Please include the area code ▶	HOME	OTHER

WARNING: Deliberately furnishing (or causing to be furnished) false information on this application is a crime punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: SEE PAGE 1 FOR REQUIRED EVIDENTIARY DOCUMENTS.

13 YOUR SIGNATURE	14 YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO PERSON IN ITEM 1 ☐ Self ☐ Other (Specify) _____
WITNESS (Needed only if signed by mark "X")	WITNESS (Needed only if signed by mark "X")

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE (FOR SSA USE ONLY)

SSN ASSIGNED ☐☐☐-☐☐-☐☐☐☐		DTC	SSA RECEIPT DATE
		NPN	
DOC	NTC CAN	BIC	SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF EMPLOYEE(S) REVIEWING EVIDENCE AND/OR CONDUCTING INTERVIEW
TYPE(S) OF EVIDENCE SUBMITTED	IDN	☐ MANDATORY IN PERSON INTERVIEW CONDUCTED ITV	DATE
			DCL DATE

Form SS-5 (5-84) 3

Macmillan English Study and Composition Blackline Masters G9 Scribner/Macmillan

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Job Application, Part 1

PLEASE PRINT

A. PERSONAL DATA

1. Name _____ (Last / First / Middle Initial) 2. Social Security No. _____

3. Mailing Address _____ (No. / Street / City / State / ZIP Code)

4. Permanent Address (if different) _____ (No. / Street / City / State / ZIP Code)

5. Home Phone _____ 6. Business Phone _____ (if different) 7. Age _____ (if 18 yrs. or under)

8. Person to Notify in Case of Emergency a. Name _____

b. Address _____

c. Phone No. _____ d. Relationship to You _____

9. a. Have you ever worked for us before? _____ b. If so, when? _____

c. What was your position? _____

10. Position Desired a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

B. EDUCATION

1. Number of Years Completed _____

TYPE	NAME	FROM (mo./yr.)	TO (mo./yr.)	DIPLOMA OR DEGREE	SPECIALIZATION OR MAJOR
2. High School	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____	d. _____	e. _____
3. College	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____	d. _____	e. _____
4. Technical	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____	d. _____	e. _____
5. Business	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____	d. _____	e. _____

C. SPECIAL SKILLS

1. a. Type? ___ b. Words per Minute ___ 2. a. Shorthand? ___ b. Words per Minute ___

3. Explain any other special skills, experience, or training. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Macmillan English Study and Composition Worksheets G10 Scribner/Macmillan

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Job Application, Part 2

D. MILITARY SERVICE

1. Branch _____ 2. Date Entered _____ 3. Date Discharged _____

4. Rank at Discharge _____ 5. Military Work Experience _____

_____

E. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (List most recent job first.)

1. a. _____ (From) b. _____ (To) c. _____ (Job Title) d. _____ (Pay Rate)

e. _____ (Name of Employer) f. _____ (Address (include city, state, and ZIP code))

g. _____ (Specific Duties)

h. _____ (Reason for Leaving)

2. a. _____ (From) b. _____ (To) c. _____ (Job Title) d. _____ (Pay Rate)

e. _____ (Name of Employer) f. _____ (Address (include city, state, and ZIP code))

g. _____ (Specific Duties)

h. _____ (Reason for Leaving)

F. PERSONAL REFERENCES (Do not include relatives or former employers.)

1. a. _____ (Name) b. _____ (Address)

c. _____ (Phone No.) d. _____ (Occupation) e. _____ (Years Known)

2. a. _____ (Name) b. _____ (Address)

c. _____ (Phone No.) d. _____ (Occupation) e. _____ (Years Known)

3. a. _____ (Name) b. _____ (Address)

c. _____ (Phone No.) d. _____ (Occupation) e. _____ (Years Known)

I hereby affirm that the information given in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

G. 1. _____ (Signature) 2. _____ (Date)

Macmillan English Study and Composition Worksheets G10 Scribner/Macmillan

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Résumé Format

RESUME OF _____

Prepared: _____
Date

Address _____ Telephone: _____

_____

OBJECTIVE: _____

_____

SKILLS

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

EDUCATION

Dates	School Name and Location	Other Information (Major, honors, etc.)
Dates	School Name and Location	Other Information (Major, honors, etc.)

JOB EXPERIENCE

Dates,	Job Duties	
Company Name		Company Location
Dates	Job Duties	
Company Name		Company Location

References available upon request.

Macmillan English Study and Composition Blackline Masters G12 Scribner/Macmillan

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

College Application, Part 1

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

Class of 19—

Please type or print in ink.

A. PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Legal name _____ (Last / First / Middle (complete) / Jr., III, etc.)
2. Nickname or name you prefer to be called (if different) _____
3. Sex _____ 4. Birthdate _____ (Month / Day / Year)
5. Mailing address _____ (No. Street / City / State / ZIP code)
6. Permanent address (if different) _____ (No. Street / City / State / ZIP code)
7. Telephone at mailing address _____ (Area Code / Number)
8. Permanent home telephone (if different) _____ (Area Code / Number)
9. Are you a citizen of the United States? _____
10. If not, of what country are you a citizen? _____
11. Have you applied to this university previously? _____
12. If so, when? _____
13. Do you plan to apply for financial aid? _____

B. EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

1. Area(s) of academic interest _____
2. Probable career or professional plans _____
3. School you attend now _____
4. Address of your school _____
5. Date of secondary school graduation _____ (Month / Year)
6. School telephone _____ (Area Code / Number)

Macmillan English Study and Composition Blackline Masters G11 Scribner/Macmillan

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

College Application, Part 2

C. PERSONAL INTERESTS, ACTIVITIES, AND HONORS

Please list, in order of importance to you, your hobbies and/or main school, community, and/or family activities.

	Name of Activity	Position Held or Special Achievements
1.	a. _____	b. _____
2.	a. _____	b. _____
3.	a. _____	b. _____
4.	a. _____	b. _____

5. Please note any scholastic distinctions or honors that you have earned during your years in high school. _____

_____

Please list any jobs you held during your years in high school.

	Employer	Position Held	Hours Worked Per Week	Dates
6.	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____	d. _____
7.	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____	d. _____
8.	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____	d. _____

9. Describe your summer activities, including jobs.
   a. Last summer _____
   b. Two summers ago _____

Macmillan English Study and Composition Blackline Masters G11 Scribner/Macmillan

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Listening to a Speech

Speaker's Name _____

Audience _____

Title of Speech _____

1. Was the purpose of the speech to inform, to persuade, or to entertain? _____

2. What was the main idea of the speech? _____

3. What were the most important supporting details? _____

4. a. What new terms, if any, were introduced in the speech? _____

   b. What do these terms mean? _____

5. What visual aids, if any, did the speaker use? _____

6. Further notes on the speech: _____

Macmillan English Study and Composition Worksheets G10 Scribner/Macmillan

Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Evaluating a Speech

Speaker's Name _____

Audience _____

Title of Speech _____

Contents of the Speech

1. a. What was the purpose of the speech? _____

   b. Did the speaker achieve that purpose? _____

2. Was the speech appropriate for the audience? _____

3. Did the opening statement of the speech capture the audience's interest? _____

4. Were the speaker's explanations clear? _____

5. Did the speaker use interesting language? _____

6. Did the speaker connect the ideas in the speech clearly and logically? _____

7. a. Did the speaker use definitions, examples, quotations, or statistics? _____

   b. Did they help to explain the ideas in the speech? _____

8. a. What visual aids, if any, did the speaker use? _____

   b. Did they help to illustrate the ideas in the speech? _____

9. Did the closing statement summarize the ideas in the speech? _____

10. Did the audience seem to like the speech? _____

Speakers Delivery

11. Did the speaker use good posture and avoid fidgeting? _____

12. Did the speaker look at the audience while speaking? _____

13. Did the speaker speak distinctly? _____

14. Did the speaker speak at an appropriate rate? _____

15. Did the speaker vary his or her voice tone and volume? _____

16. Did the speaker avoid "uh," "and-a," "OK?" and "like"? _____

17. Was the speaker aware of the audience's reactions? _____

18. What were the strong points of the speech? _____

19. In what ways could the speech be improved? _____

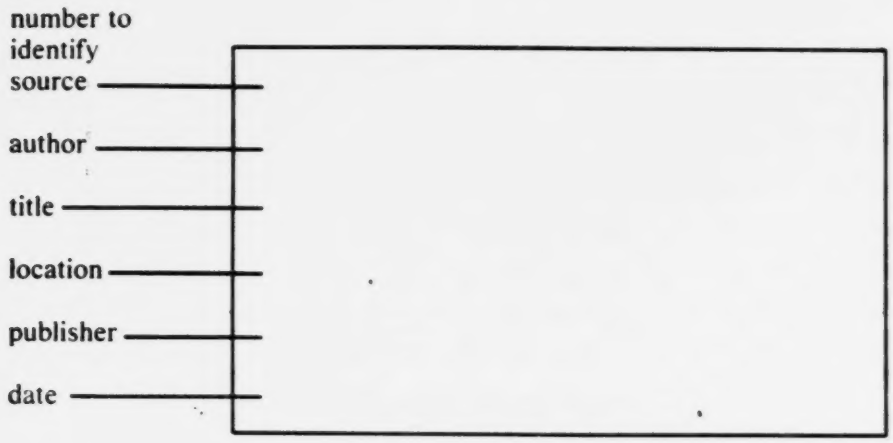
Macmillan English Study and Composition Blackline Masters G9 Scribner/Macmillan

Name Class Date

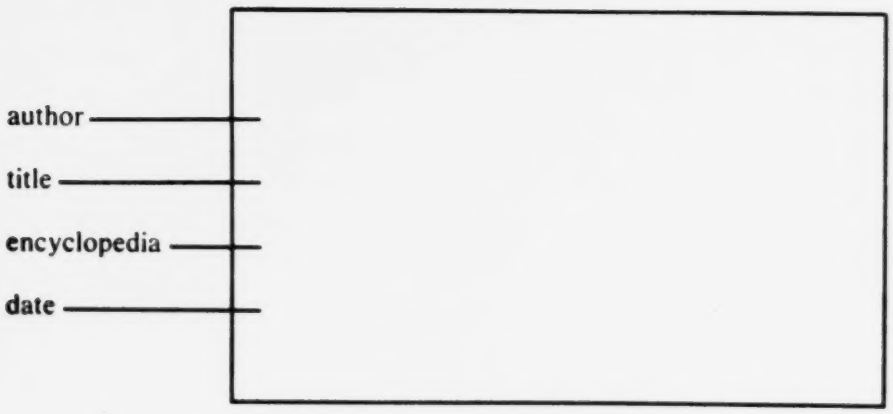
STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Bibliography Cards

Bibliography Card for a Book



Bibliography Card for an Encyclopedia Article



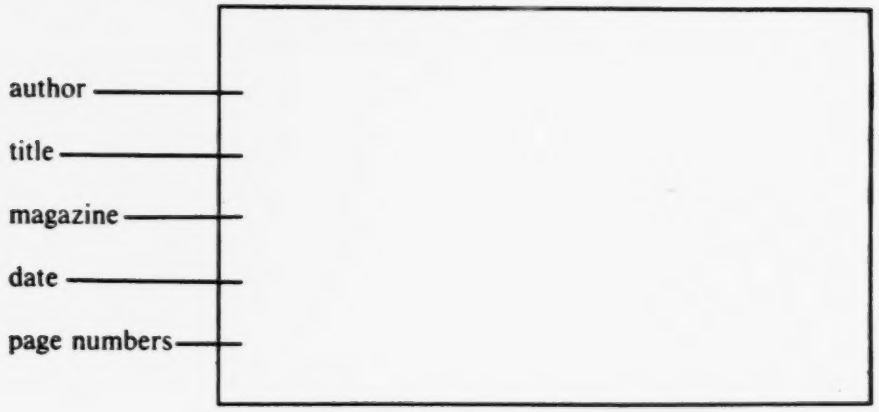
Macmillan English Study and Composition Worksheets G10 Scribner/Macmillan

Name Class Date

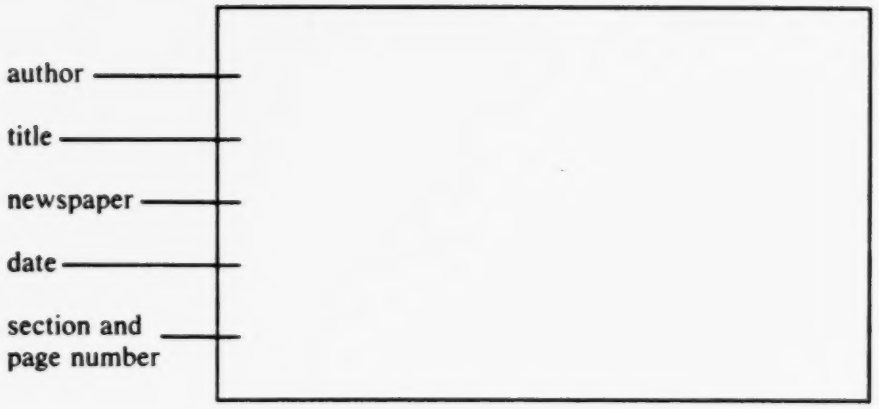
STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Bibliography Cards

Bibliography Card for a Magazine Article



Bibliography Card for a Newspaper Article

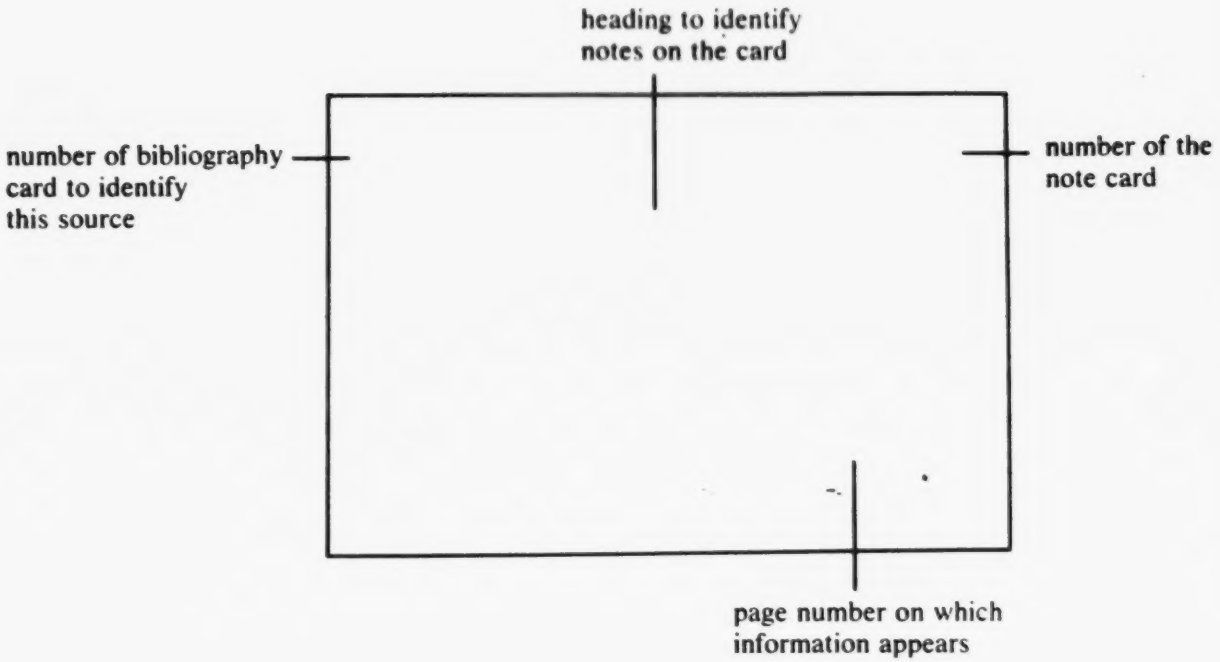


Macmillan English Study and Composition Worksheets G10 Scribner/Macmillan

Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Note Cards


heading to identify notes on the card
number of bibliography card to identify this source
number of the note card
page number on which information appears

Macmillan English Study and Composition Blackline Masters G9 Scribner/Macmillan

Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Checklist for Writing the Research Report

1. What steps have I taken to limit my topic? _____

2. How many sources on my topic are available? _____

3. Where can I find general information on my topic? _____

4. For what purpose and audience am I writing? _____

5. What is my controlling idea? _____

6. What questions can I ask that will help me to write a working outline? _____

7. What modes of writing are appropriate to my topic? _____

8. What information goes on the bibliography cards? _____

9. What are the best ways to take notes? _____

10. How should I use the working outline to help me write the first draft? _____

11. When should I insert the footnotes, and what forms should I use? _____

12. How should I revise the first draft? _____

13. What should I include in the final bibliography, and what forms should I follow? _____

14. What format should I use for the final report? _____

Macmillan English Study and Composition Blackline Masters G9 Scribner/Macmillan

ART ACTIVITIES

K-3 ° During National Children's Book Week, decorate a hat to represent a book that was read. Small items or words can be attached to the hat to represent events or characters in the book. Make a collar or necktie to display the title. Write a book report to share with the class. Present the report and wear the hat for everyone to enjoy.

° After fingerpainting, dictate or write about what you did or describe the painting.

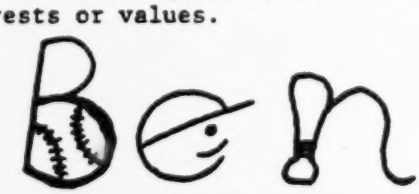
K-6 ° Represent words with a picture or with an arrangement of letters that implies the meaning of the word.

° Create an imaginary animal by pasting or drawing one-half of one animal to one-half of another animal. Write a story about your animal including where it lives, what it eats, what it likes, and what it dislikes.

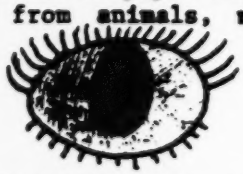
° After reading "Benny's Flag," which tells about the boy who designed Alaska's flag, design a flag which includes symbols. Write a brief explanation telling why these symbols were used.

° Create letterheads which use your initials or name and symbolize some of your interests or values.

Example:



K-8 ° Make a thumbprint with ink on paper and then draw a figure out of the print. Anything from animals, machines, or places goes!

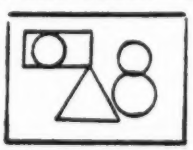


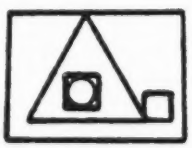
After the drawing is finished, write or list specifics about the drawing such as name, age, personality traits, hobbies, or origin. Then write a paragraph introducing the thumbprint.

K-12 ° Make a book jacket for a story being studied, a library book, or your own story. Design the cover. Write a summary and a biographical or autobiographical sketch for the flaps.

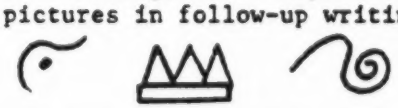
° Make a doodle. Imagine what it might be, and write a two or four line poem to go with the doodle.

° [The teacher makes copies of two figures such as those shown below and labels one figure X and the other figure Y. The class will be divided into small groups. Half the groups are given figure X drawings and half are given figure Y drawings.] Write clear directions explaining how to reproduce the figure you were given. Exchange directions with one of the other groups without showing the other group your figure. Now both sets of groups must draw the figure explained in the student directions. When completed, each figure X group can demonstrate their drawings and then see the original. Then the figure Y groups display their drawings and check them against the original.





° [The teacher distributes a drawing or design such as the ones shown below.] Complete the drawing. The drawing may be part of a larger, more complex drawing, or it may be a complete entity in itself. Use these pictures in follow-up writing assignments. Be creative!



° [The teacher will first read a character sketch from a novel, short story, or poem.] Draw a caricature of the character described in the sketch. In small groups share and discuss the drawings. Choose the one which most closely reflects the written description. [Students then can write a description of another character and ask classmates to create a caricature for that description.]

° Write "how to" instructions for either an art project such as making a bas-relief or for an art form such as sculpture or pottery.

° Create greeting cards for holidays. Send them to parents, friends, and other relatives.

° Design a poster, chart, handbill, or commercial for another school subject. Write captions where they are needed.

° Use clay to make an animal or story character, and write a cinquain about the clay sculpture.

° [The teacher displays a famous drawing.] Write about this picture. You might consider what might happen next, or what happened just before, or how it makes you feel.

° Make a collage and write about it.

° Write a description/explanation to accompany original artwork.

4-12 ° Draw a political cartoon for a current news issue or an area of study. Write the dialogue for speaking characters and/or a caption for the cartoon.

° Write a dialogue between you and a famous painting. If the painting could talk, what would it say? In the dialogue you speak to the work, and it responds to you.

7-12 ° Observe and study a display of cancelled stamps. Now design several stamps and write a brief explanation of each.

° Photograph things that you feel represent the characteristics of life in our time and in our town. Write a paragraph explaining what each photograph represents.

BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

- Find articles in at least two different magazines concerning a particular industry such as the automobile, record, petroleum, computer, or movie industry. Write a report on any recent developments in this industry. Also, make a list of magazines related to your chosen industry to use for further research.

- Write business letters to actual audiences (to request information, applications, college catalogs, free materials; to complain about a defective product or poor service; or to praise a company or individual). [Class members help edit the letters before actually mailing them.]

- Prepare a résumé.

- Investigate savings and checking accounts at several local banks. Then write a short summary of the location, hours, interest rates, services available, and other important facts about each bank. Conclude the activity by using the facts gathered to write about the bank you would patronize. Be sure to use specific reasons why that bank would get your business.

- Learn about and explain how insurance rates are calculated. You might do this in pamphlet or book form.

- Study an advertisement. Think about the effect it might have on several different people such as a lawyer, a preschool child, a young mother, a teacher, or an athlete. Choose five people and write a few sentences telling the reaction each would have to the advertisement.

- Write several questions you would ask if you were interviewing a job applicant. Then role play this situation with another student by asking your questions. The class critiques the applicant and the interviewer.

COMPUTER ACTIVITIES

- Research and write a monograph on the evolution of the computer.

- Investigate and write about how computers are used for school work, home management, home finance, sports, hobbies, and games.

- Research the different types of computers on the market today. Compare price, usefulness, and available software.

- Write programs for games or math problems.

- Write about the use and misuse of computers.

- Interview an expert on computer programming -about the process of developing the step-by-step instructions that are fed into a computer. Write a report of the interview being careful to include every detail and to organize the details in logical order.

- Use the Reader's Guide to find articles on two of the top-selling computers on the market today. Compare the strengths and weaknesses of these two computers in a written report. Make these reports available for students and teachers. These could be displayed in the school library.

- Review information on how to do a simple task on a basic home computer. Write a set of directions that would enable a person unfamiliar with the computer to complete the task. Be careful to explain any computer jargon you might use.

- Compare two types of computer language such as BASIC, PASCAL, OR COBOL. Use language that is simple and general enough so that an audience completely unfamiliar with computers could understand.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

- Correspond with a pen pal from a foreign country.

- Read foreign language newspaper accounts and write news capsules in the foreign language. Display these on posters on the bulletin board.

- Write and present a short play in a foreign language.

- Prepare lessons in a foreign language to present to younger students.

- Prepare a foreign language joke or riddle book.

- Compare English to a foreign language you are studying. Give three examples of pronunciation differences and list fifteen words that are similar in both languages.

- To increase and strengthen your vocabulary, look through the dictionary and identify the symbol that indicates foreign words and phrases. Look up and write 15-20 foreign words and phrases along with their pronunciations and definitions. Use these words and phrases in your creative writing.

HEALTH ACTIVITIES

K-12
- Watch a health film. Outline the major parts of the film.
- Discuss and role play emergency situations such as fire and tornado drills. Then write directions for an emergency exit. Exchange directions. Read aloud and follow them exactly to see if they are clearly written.
- Write about the feelings you have when you argue with your parents.
- Create colorful displays explaining ideas such as proper dental care or good hygiene practices.
- Write an essay, poem, song, or short story illustrating how the heart is an organ as well as a symbol of human emotions. Incorporate both fact and fiction.

K-3
- Cut out pictures of faces which illustrate different feelings. Mount the pictures on paper and decide which feeling each face suggests. Categorize all the pictures under major topics. Select one picture and write about that feeling.
- Draw and color a vegetable. Pretend to be that vegetable. Write a story, poem, or play about the vegetable you selected.

K-6
- Brainstorm items needed for a first-aid kit. Explain why each item is needed. Make paper cut outs of items and role-play using items in the first-aid kit.
- Write safety rules for school and home. Role-play situations which illustrate the rule. Make safety posters and display them in the school.

K-8
- Write about the four food groups before the unit is taught.
- Record foods eaten for one day or week. Chart foods in four food groups to see if you are eating balanced meals.

2-4
- Write a haiku about the parts of the body such as the heart, face, or feet.

4-12
- Write an editorial for the school newspaper on health topics such as the following: fast food, junk food, or fad diets; the effect advertising has on what you eat or where you eat; vitamins, minerals, or additives found in foods.
- Write about one of your teachers, classmates, or school administrators and describe their personal habits or characteristics. Do not mention the person by name. Share and see if others can identify the person you have described.

- [The teacher leads a discussion on problems that young people encounter such as peer pressure, cheating, drugs, and smoking. Then a specific scenario involving one of these problems is given.] Write about the moral choices involved in this given situation.

- Write an account of a drop of blood passing through the circulatory system, or a breath of air passing through the respiratory system, or a bit of food passing through the digestive system. Write these experiences as if you are the blood, air, or food.

- Write a nutritional low-calorie diet book giving specific menus for persons wanting to lose weight.

7-12

- Research and write about certain psychological ailments prevalent among teenagers such as anorexia nervosa, depression, or alcoholism.

- Discuss and write about a common teen problem. Offer ways to solve the problem or cope with it.

- After studying different diseases and sicknesses, choose one and familiarize yourself with its symptoms. Write a letter to your doctor telling him the symptoms you have. Exchange your letter with another student. Each of you must write another letter identifying the disease and suggesting the appropriate treatment.

- Interview a coach to gather information about how minor sport injuries are handled. Write your findings in a written report or essay.

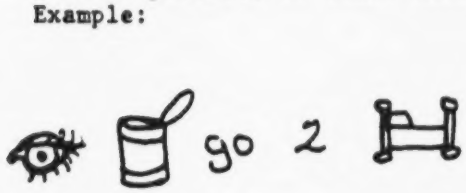
LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITIES

K-3

- Cut out pictures or draw pictures to create a wordless book. Dictate stories on tape for the book. Compare the stories for similarities and differences.
- Use alphabet macaroni to spell out words or sentences which could label pictures.
- After writing stories, poems, or biographies record your writing on tape for a listening center.
- Create a dictionary by writing a word, drawing a picture of the word, and then writing a sentence about the word.

K-6

- Trace your hand. Think of a topic you would like to write about. Write this topic across the palm. Think of five main points which deal with your topic. Put each point on a finger of the hand. Use this to write your paragraph.
- Compile a scrapbook of favorite things by drawing or pasting a picture on each page. Write a sentence about each page. Date each entry and share with others periodically.
- After the teacher has read a story to the class, reconstruct the story with a story wheel emphasizing the beginning, middle, and end.
- Rewrite a nursery rhyme into a short story or play.
- Write a secret message to other students using lemon juice or different codes.
- Write sentences using a rebus. You may write some words, but find or draw pictures of other words in the sentences.
  Example:



R
O
ROAD
D
(crossroads)

- Listen to a story in which the character has a decision to make. Brainstorm possible alternatives and their consequences. After brainstorming write an ending for the story, and draw a picture to illustrate the story.

K-8

- After watching a simple magic trick, write about what you saw, how you think the trick worked, or how it made you feel.

- Choose a favorite character from a book, nursery rhyme, or cartoon. Write a story from that character's point of view. (I was born . . .). Later dress-up as that character and present a short version for your classmates.

- Cut out magazine pictures and write a caption for them.

K-12

- [The teacher mounts a set of four pictures.] Write or dictate to the teacher a sentence about each picture. Could these be rearranged to create a different story?

- Use your first or last name to write an acrostic, using one word lines or lines with short phrases.

- Write original rhyming couplets.
  *Write the first line, exchange papers, and write the second line of another student's couplet.
  *Write a rhyming couplet with internal rhyme.
  *Write a quatrain with two rhyming couplets.

- Write your own autobiography. Use pictures, photographs, or other visual aids.

- [The teacher should prepare comic strips by mounting them on paper and removing existing words.] Add words to the empty bubbles to create a conversation between the characters.

- Write friendly letters, invitations, and thank-you notes for class activities.

- Write a news article for the school newspaper about activities in class. Make sure to include a headline.

- Share the scariest moment of your life in small groups. Then choose one story and write it together. [The teacher could put the story on transparencies for the class to edit together.]

- Rewrite a story or fairy tale using a different point of view (the witch in Hansel and Gretel or the stepmother in Cinderella).

° Write a story with a small group of three to five students. Each student writes a few sentences or a paragraph and then covers all but the last sentence. Another student continues the story and again covers all but the last sentence before the next student adds to the story. Share the finished humorous story with the group.

° After reading a good book the characters seem almost like friends. Write a letter to a character commenting on events that occurred in the book.

° Write a paragraph narrated by a familiar object (a pencil, a hat, a worn dollar bill). The object tells how it feels and what its life is like. Do not tell what the object is until the last sentence. Read these to the class.

3-12 ° Write business letters to actual audiences (to request information, applications, college catalogs, free materials; to complain about a defective product or poor service; or to praise a company or individual). Class members help edit the letters before actually mailing them.

° Create stories for younger children. Try to include children's favorite pets, toys, or tv shows. If possible, share the best stories with students in a lower grade.

° Write an alternate beginning, ending, or sequel episode to a short story, play, or novel.

° Choose a partner. Write your partner a note. Tell something you did yesterday, something you are doing now, and something you plan to do tomorrow. Exchange notes. Underline the verbs in your friend's note, and tell what tense was used.

° Choose a topic. Write a declarative, an interrogative, an exclamatory, and an imperative sentence about the topic. Using the same group of sentences, underline the simple subject and draw a circle around the simple predicate.

° Ask your parents to tell you about a family tradition. Use the idea to write a legend similar to Paul Bunyan, Casey Jones, or Pecos Bill.

° Take a "noun walk." Make a list of all the people, places, and things that you see during your walk. Put them under the proper heading.
Example: My walk to lunch

people	places	things
janitor	hall	lockers
librarian	library	floors
aide	lunchroom	windows
		chain

Choose a word from your list. Use this word as a topic to write a paragraph.

- From a list of proverbs, choose one to illustrate in story form.

- Compile a dictionary of fifty slang expressions used by your friends or by today's teenagers, in general. Put them in alphabetical order and provide translations for each.

- Rewrite a fairy tale you know well and change the action to a modern day setting.

- After reading and studying myths, write original myths (how the elephant got his trunk, why we have rainbows, why we have thunder and lightning, why the moon shines at night).

- Write two thank-you notes for gifts. One is to your best friend, and another is to your mayor. After writing both, compare how your intended audience affected the style and words in each note. Discuss your findings in small groups.

- Read a newspaper article and write a sentence or paragraph to answer the five W's (Who, What, When, Where, and Why).

- Make a list of five interrogative sentences you would use in an interview. Interview a friend, a relative, or a community member. Use the information gathered to write about the person you interviewed.

- Complete a school registration card. Fill in each blank with the correct information.

6-12

- Using a word of mythological origin, explain how the meaning of the word is related to its origin.

  Examples:

  Mercury - Mercury automobile
  Ceres - cereal
  Atlas - atlas

7-12

- Paraphrase a poem in literal language.

- Choose a television program whose characters represent various social groups and areas of the country. Listen carefully and note examples of dialectical speech. Write down these examples and spell them the way they are pronounced. Write a brief composition explaining how the use of dialect adds to the color and realism of the program.

- Using infinitives, make a list of ten things you would like to accomplish in the next five years. Now, using gerunds, make a list of ten things you enjoy doing. Use your lists to write a composition describing your ideal future.

- Write character sketches of people you know well including details about physical appearance and personality. After writing several of these, select two characters who do not know each other and write an imagined conversation between the two.

- Write A-B-C and X-Y-Z definitions. In A-B-C definitions letter A is the word to be defined. Letter B represents a general area in which the word can be grouped. Letter C shows some distinctive feature which makes the term specific.

  Example:

A		B	C
A flag	is	a symbol	of a country.
A deer	is	a wild animal	that lives in the forest.

  X-Y-Z definitions are metaphoric. They say that things are <u>like</u> something else. Letter X is the word to be defined. Letter Y is the word that it represents or is "like" and letter Z is a special qualification. (Letter Z is optional)

  Example:

X	Y	Z
Chopsticks are like	forks	without prongs.
The clouds were like	huge piles of cotton.	

- Write sentences explaining the etymology of words.

  Example:

  <u>Clothing Words</u>
  khaki
  chino
  denim
  flannel
  gingham
  calico
  gabardine
  bandanna

- Vary a book report by transforming the traditional format into a newspaper format. Working alone or in pairs, create a newspaper that is factually accurate within the limits of the novel. Editorials and letters to the editor can express themes found in the novel; a news story can reveal the plot; a feature article can provide a close look at the main character. Write headlines, stories, editorials, features, ads, and obituaries. Illustrate stories and articles whenever possible.

- To illustrate the importance of using the appropriate level of language that fits the occasion and the audience, write skits in which formal language is used in a locker room or football field situation and slang or informal language is used in a law court, government meeting, or business meeting. These skits may then be dramatized.

  The humor resulting from these skits will exemplify the importance of matching level of standard English with the appropriate audience and purpose.

9-12

- Select twenty-five lines from any Shakespearean play and rewrite them in the language of today.

- Write a 1-2 page essay to be developed into a 3 minute speech on a fun topic with which you are familiar.

  Example:

  The art of . . .
  - impressing the teacher
  - throwing a frisbee
  - making friends/enemies
  - getting a date
  - getting out of work
  - getting along with brothers and/or sisters
  - eating spaghetti/pizza, watermelon, etc.

MATH ACTIVITIES

K-12 • Create riddles, puzzles, problems, or crossword puzzles for numbers and terms.

• Choose one of the special tools that you use in a math class such as a compass, a protractor, a calculator, or a ruler. Write a paragraph explaining how to use the tool you select.

• Write a word problem that makes use of the skill being taught.

• Survey classmate's favorite drinks, foods, or TV shows. Put the findings in a chart or graph.

K-3 • Draw a picture demonstrating a concept and write a sentence to go with the concept. Example: over/under; greater than.

K-6 • Find a simple recipe for a favorite treat. Discuss the units of measure.

K-8 • Pretend you are living in a prehistoric time. You have just killed a dinosaur. Write a recipe for the dinosaur including measurements, temperature for cooking, and how many it will serve.

1-8 • After putting numbers on the left side of the paper, translate the numerical expression on the right.

Example:

7	Seven
1001	One thousand and one
2x + 5 = 9	Five more than twice a number is nine.

1-12 • Write a paragraph to someone who was absent in math explaining how to solve a difficult problem in your math book.

4-12 • Keep track of math scores by making a bar or line graph. At frequent intervals write about your scores. Explain, reflect, and assess your progress as shown by the graph.

- Write a book of facts containing interesting mathematical information that people use every day.

- Research famous people in the history of mathematics such as Euclid, Pythagoras, Archimedes, or Sir Isaac Newton. Write a report and present it to the class. Keep a copy of your report in class for students to read.

- Study the graphic aids such as tables of weights and measures or metric conversion tables found in the front or back of most dictionaries. Prepare a report for oral presentation to your class.

- Use newspaper ads to compare prices. Decide where you would probably shop. Then write a paragraph explaining why you would choose a specific place to shop.

7-12 • Research the origins of mathematical terms such as triangle, circle, or metric system. Write this information in report form to share with the class.

- Write a financial advice column for the school newspaper suggesting to students how to earn, save, and manage money.

- Examine the economy of another country and compare the price of certain items with the price of the same items in this country. Determine the average exchange rate for the dollar. Examine the effects of inflation, average national income, and average hourly income.

9-12 • Learn about and explain how insurance rates are calculated.

MUSIC ACTIVITIES

K-12 ° Listen to a classical musical composition, and write what you feel as you listen.

° Write lyrics for a musical composition that has no lyrics.

° Create new lyrics from familiar melodies about your school adopters.

K-6 ° Create a musical instrument. Dictate or write the instructions telling how to make it.

° Sing familiar songs such as "The Cat Came Back." Then draw pictures about the lyrics, and write or dictate stories describing the pictures.

° Paraphrase lyrics to create another song from an old one.

Example: Row, row, row, your boat - Chew, chew, chew, your food

K-8 ° Listen to a recording of "Peter and the Wolf." Explain the usage of the musical instruments.

4-12 ° Research the life of a famous composer or artist. Present information about the person to the class. Choose the form that you will use to present the facts -- a report, review, skit, or dialogue.

7-12 ° Compose a song lyric that reflects current concerns or lifestyles of the 1980's.

° Use standard formal English to write about your favorite work of art or piece of music explaining why you think this work has artistic merit. Then, use informal English to rewrite your comments in letter form to a friend. Compare the two versions. What does one communicate that the other does not?

9-12 ° Make a list of your three favorite musical groups and your favorite songs by each group. Write a composition discussing your own tastes in music. Use examples from your list.

Write a three to five paragraph essay to explain a comment that you think contemporary music makes about today's society. Choose at least three current songs which support the idea that you wish to discuss. Include the names of songs and performers. Make sure the three songs give evidence to support the statement you made regarding what music says about a culture. Specific words from songs may be used.

P. E. ACTIVITIES

K-12 • Research a sport individually or in small groups. Present the information gathered (in your own words) in a pamphlet. You might want to include a history of the sport, rules, equipment needed, and special terms. Display these pamphlets for the entire class to view.

K-8 • Write the rules for a sport, or invent a new sport including a set of rules.

4-12 • Make a report on the Olympic Games comparing the ancient games with the modern games.

7-12 • Investigate the use of drugs by athletes. Focus on current tragedies involving athletes who have abused drugs.

• Research and prepare a brochure on sports medicine.

• Research the school's athletic program and compile a statistical fact book containing wins, losses, averages, plays, and expenditures.

• Interview coaches and players about the strengths and weaknesses of different school teams.

SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

K-12
- Write observations of teacher or student demonstrations.
- Create an invention of the future. Draw and explain how it works. Make an advertisement for the invention.
- Keep a weather chart consisting of the temperature, barometric pressure, and rainfall. Explain your personal reactions to the weather during this time period.

K-3
- Pretend to be another person or animal. Write a story through the eyes of the other person or animal about what you would see and feel.
- Make a book about your class pet. Some topics to write about might include pet care, food preferred, and/or pet activities and adventures.
- Write descriptions of common objects such as a stop sign, scissors, a pencil, or an egg as if you were seeing these objects for the first time.

K-6
- Find pictures of animals and display them on a bulletin board. Discuss the physical characteristics and needs of certain animals and the responsibilities of pet owners to their pets. Write sentences about each animal including its name.
- Compose poems about an animal. [Students may write as a group or individually.]
  Example:

line 1	name of animal
line 2	2 words describing the animal
line 3	3 things the animal does
line 4	2 words that tell how the animal feels
line 5	another name for the animal

- Bring a stuffed animal to class and discuss the animal as if it were alive. Compose stories about the animals.
- [The teacher provides an animal cracker for each student.] Pretend your cracker has come to life, and it is your pet. Write a story about this pet including name, favorite foods, sleeping habits, friends, tricks, or other information. Draw a picture of the animal. Then you may eat the animal cracker.
- Watch and discuss a filmstrip or movie on the seasons. Discuss the current season and what might be discovered on a walk around school. Take a walk and collect leaves, nuts, or other objects which are on the ground. Compare what was found with what was expected. Write or dictate sentences to label the objects found. [Teachers may compile a book of children's writing about what happens each month or season.]

- [The teacher provides a "feely box" with various smooth, sharp, or rough objects such as a piece of metal, sandpaper, sponge, smooth rock, or stick.] Students describe the objects without looking at them and compare the unknown item to familiar items. Example: This [sandpaper] is as rough as my father's face.

- Discover a new planet. Write several paragraphs describing the new planet and name it. Name all mountains and bodies of water. Finally, draw a picture of this new planet.

- Draw or find pictures of machines. Classify them according to their function. Discuss the purpose of each type of machine. Try designing a machine for the future. Write about its functions.

K-8

- Write a class book. As each unit is studied, all reports are compiled and kept in a folder, file, or loose leaf notebook. [Students may then use these class books for review or sources of information.]

  Sample units: famous scientists, animals, birds, plants, fish, insects, microscopic animals, the human body.

- Imagine that you are an astronaut. Write a letter to friends on earth about your outer-space adventures.

- Choose a partner. One partner is blindfolded and the other provides a specific object for the other to examine using the five senses. Partners exchange roles. When both have examined the object, describe the experience in written form.

- After analyzing family photos, find similar characteristics in family members. Make charts showing these characteristics. Use the charts to write about one particular trait.

3-12

- Write letters to great figures of science (Curie, Pasteur, Galileo), or write scripts showing great moments in their careers.

4-12

- Write about one scientific invention that has affected your life. Discuss what your life would have been like without this discovery.

- Write a short paper describing the stages involved in the process of conducting an experiment based on the Scientific Method.

7-12

- Observe a simple laboratory experiment. Write a paragraph explaining the cause and effect relationship involved.

- Choose a scientific concept to research such as photosynthesis, metabolism, nuclear fission, entropy, cell division, or carbon dating. Write an explanation of the concept in a clear, straightforward way so that it could be understood by younger children. Pay close attention to sentence structure, word usage, and general organization.

- Create an acrostic poem about a plant or an animal. Each line must include a fact about the organism.

  Example: CLAM

  Calcium shields the bivalve
  Little movement can they have
  A majority believe siphon is the neck
  Muscles close shielding whenever an enemy inspects.

7-12

- Write a scenario illustrating life on other planets. Consider recent data on chemical and climatic conditions on Mars, Jupiter, or Venus. What possible life forms might exist on these planets? How might humans adapt to live on these planets?

- Research and write about careers in science.

Name Class Date

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Checklist for Revising a Scientific or Technical Report

1. a. What, if anything, distracts from the serious, impersonal tone of my report?

   b. Have I removed any references to personal experiences or opinions?

   c. Have I used third-person pronouns throughout?

2. a. What background information does the introduction provide?

   b. How well does the introduction state my purpose?

3. What if anything, can I do to present my findings more concisely and objectively in the discussion?

4. a. What conclusions have I stated?

   b. Are the conclusions consistent with the facts presented in the introduction and the discussion?

5. a. What corrections, if any, do I need to make on the title page, in the table of contents, and in the bibliography?

   b. Have all elements of mechanics been handled correctly?

6. What improvements can I make to increase the precision of my language?

7. What other editing should I do on a sentence-by-sentence basis?

8. How carefully have I proofread the final version?

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SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITIES

K-12
- Keep a travel log of any trip that you take during the school year. Share it with the class.
- Discuss current world, social, or political problems and give suggestions for solving them. Example - If I were President, I would . . . .
- Role-play an interview with a famous person from history. Ask thoughtful questions.
- Read books about luck, then discuss luck and fate. Write one-line fortunes. Eat fortune cookies. Compare those fortunes with the ones you created.
- Interview or read about a person you admire. Write about that character and explain why you think that person is admirable.
- Create a story or legend. One idea might be create a story about how a favorite place received its name.
- Write about some historical place you have visited. Share your account with the class.
- Write your autobiography.

K-6
- Write a journal describing an imaginary day in a place being studied. Describe the weather, people, a landmark, or other details about the place.
- Write about the celebration of holidays in other places. Example: Christmas in other lands
- Write a story about "What I want to be when I grow up." Include the name of the job, skills needed, clothes to wear, and the importance of the job.
- Lead a discussion about helpers at school. Include such helpers as the librarian, aides, school bus drivers, or the crossing guard. Write thank-you notes to these people, and then deliver them.

- After listening to tall tales about characters such as Davy Crockett, Paul Bunyan, or Johnny Appleseed, create your own heroes for tall tales and write a story about them. Draw pictures of these heroes.

- Display traffic symbols or other picture messages. Describe where each symbol would be used and what it means.

- Find pictures of your city or draw them. Paste the pictures in a scrapbook and identify the places. Write about the places or plan field trips to visit interesting ones. [The teacher might have resource people speak to the class about some of these interesting places.]

3-12 • Draw a map to scale for a specific area. Write the directions from a given point A to a given point B. Be sure to include the distance in terms of measurement.

Example: Directions from home to school.
Scale: ¼ inch = 1 mile
Distance - 1 mile, 1½ miles, etc.

- Write a sentence or paragraph describing or explaining a geographical land form.

Example: continent, fiord

- Make a bulletin board of your city's skyline. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of living in your city. Then write an editorial discussing local problems and possible solutions.

- Examine travel brochures and posters of different places being studied. Discuss these places and write poems, stories, or plays about them.

- Trace the history of your family as far back as you can. Ask your parents and other relatives to help you obtain information about your ancestors. You might include questions such as:

  - When did they come to this country?
  - What country did they come from?
  - What kind of work did they do?
  - What schools did they attend?

Use this information to write interesting facts or stories about your parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents.

- Interview local residents who know about traditional practices in cooking, herbal and folk medicine, toymaking, or furniture-making. Compile this information in booklet form.

- Individually or as a group select a town. Write letters to the Chamber of Commerce in that town asking for school information, a city map, and brochures. After getting information write a letter to some class at a school in that city. Send a brief description of your class or school.

- Write to a social studies class at another school. The first letter may be an introduction in which you describe yourself, your school, and community. In later letters, you may start developing relationships -- writing about lifestyles, asking and answering questions, sharing hopes and fears, or discussing political issues.

- Write to someone, either real or imagined, who is planning to attend your school. The letters should tell the incoming student what to expect and how to succeed in social studies class.

- Write a one to three paragraph report explaining the cause-effect relationship of a problem existing in a place of study.

- Write a letter to a present day American from an American in a different time period. Write the letter as if it were found in a time capsule.

- After reading and discussing the Declaration of Independence, write a personal declaration. Prewrite in journals about declaring independence from a group to which you belong (club, team, etc.). Then follow the outline to produce a declaration...

To:	Name the group from which you are declaring your independence.
From:	Give name and others if they too are declaring independence.
Paragraph 1	Announce what you are planning to do. Explain why you must do this now.
Paragraph 2	Indicate the general truths you feel support your opinion, and justify what you plan to do.
Paragraph 3	Tell your complaints.
Paragraph 4	Discuss your past attempts to solve the problem.
Paragraph 5	Tell what you are now going to do. Sign the document.

- Design and create bumper stickers, slogans, posters, or signs for political candidates.

- Paraphrase important documents like the Declaration of Independence or the Gettysburg Address to insure comprehension of the ideas found in them.

- Compose a letter to a historical figure. Ask the person questions or respond to what the figure has done. Tell how the world has changed since that person lived. In a reply letter assume the personality of the figure and answer the questions put to him. Also describe life as it was then. [Students could work in pairs to do this.]

- Write a newspaper article telling about an event in history. Remember the 5 W's -- Who? What? When? Where? Why?

- Consider what would have happened years later if certain events of history had turned out differently. Write your account of what would have happened. Example:

  What if--
  Lincoln had not been killed?
  the South had won the Civil War?
  the American Indians had been hostile to the Pilgrims?
  Hitler had been more successful?
  J. F. Kennedy had lived?
  the British had won the Revolutionary War?

- Choose a particular historical moment and write it in the first person.

  Example:
  I walked with Marquette and Joliet.
  I was with Hannibal when he crossed the Alps.

- Write an imitation of a historical document or famous speech.

  Example:
  Write the "Constitution of the Class"
  "The Declaration of My Responsibility"
  "My speech at Gettysburg"
  "I Have a Dream"

- Pretend you are an early man before herding and farming were invented. Describe your days. What activities take up most of your time and why? What tools have you discovered or invented? How do the seasons influence your living style?

- You have only the materials in your pocket and are stranded on an island. What are you going to do? How will you survive until rescued? How will you prepare for rescue?

- Make a chart listing facts and propaganda used in advertising products. Discuss what makes you want to buy an item. Write an advertisement for _____.

- Write an editorial to the local or school paper taking a firm stand on a local issue that is important to you.

7-12 • After researching a person, list or cluster at least twenty important things about that person. Ask yourself, "What did he/she need?" "What did he/she feel?" "What caused him/her to worry?" Write a biopoem which states not only facts, but also reveals information or conclusions that you have drawn from the facts.

Biopoems follow this pattern.

Line 1. First name
Line 2. Four traits that describe character
Line 3. Relative (brother, sister, daughter) of _____
Line 4. Lover of _____ (list three)
Line 5. Who feels _____ (three items)
Line 6. Who needs _____ (three items)
Line 7. Who fears _____ (three items)
Line 8. Who gives _____ (three items)
Line 9. Who would like to see _____ (three items)
Line 10. Resident of _____
Line 11. Last name

from Roots in the Sawdust, NCTE.

- Choose a well-known person from history. Spotlight a moment in that person's life using several vantage points (what the person says, what others say, how the person acts). Write an account combining the facts you know about the person with what you think they would be like.

- Use dialogue to write two different versions of a confrontation between two or more people. Example: Write about the duel between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr. Tell the story of the duel from Hamilton's point of view, then from Burr's.

- Write a newspaper article describing an event at your school such as a football game or student council election. Report the facts without using figurative language. Make sure the article is non-judgmental and free from personal bias. Then rewrite the same article as an editorial expressing your attitude and opinion toward the event. In the rewritten version, use figurative language. Write a brief composition discussing which version is more interesting and which is more accurate.

9-12 • Research a specific time period in history such as the Revolutionary Period, the Neo-classic Age, the Era of Western Expansion, the Roaring '20's, the 1960's, or the 1980's. Describe the tone and mood of that time in relation to attitudes people had toward existing policies of government and the way people expressed themselves socially and culturally. The research may be limited to a particular aspect of the period such as music, art, or literature.

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

STUDY AND COMPOSITION WORKSHEET

Checklist For Revising a Social Studies Report

1. What questions can I apply to the social studies topic to define and focus it—*who? what? when? where? how?* or *why?* _____

2. a. What basic social studies facts or definitions does the audience need? _____

   b. What statements or word choices, if any, are inappropriate to the audience? _____

   c. What is the purpose of this piece of writing? _____

3. a. Is any source, primary or secondary, incorrectly or insufficiently identified? _____

   b. Is the proper format for documentation used in all cases? _____

4. What qualifying words should be used to revise any generalizations? _____

5. Which statements are not as objective as possible? Which, if any, use unclear language, inexact quotations, unlabeled opinions, unnecessary adverbs, or loaded words? _____

6. Which transitions that show time can be used to make chronological statements absolutely clear? _____

7. a. Which causes and effects, if any, are not clearly identified? _____

   b. Which personal, social, or economic causes and effects need to be reconsidered and expanded? _____

8. a. Are any points of comparison or contrast unclear? _____

   b. Should any changes be made in the organization so that the point-by-point comparison or contrast will be easier for the reader to follow? _____

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